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AMERICAN CRISIS BIOGRAPHIES

# WILLIAM T. SHERMAN

by

EDWARD ROBINS

Author of "Benjamin Franklin," "Romances of Early America," etc.

PHILADELPHIA

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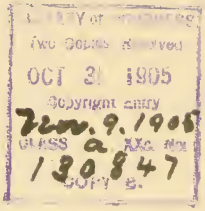


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# CHRONOLOGY

1820—February 8, born in Lancaster, Ohio; the son of Charles Robert and Mary Hoyt Sherman. On the death of his father he is adopted by Senator Thomas Ewing.

1836—June 12, reaches West Point, where he enters the military academy as a cadet from Ohio, his appointment dating from July 1. His classmates include George H. Thomas.

1840—June, graduates from West Point, sixth in his class. Commissioned a second lieutenant in the Third Artillery, July 1. He is afterward stationed in Florida.

1841—November 30, commissioned a first lieutenant.

1842—June, ordered to Fort Moultrie, in Charleston harbor, where he is stationed for four years.

1846—July 14, embarks with United States troops for service in California. Arrives in Monterey the following January, and does duty as an acting adjutant-general, etc.

1850—May 1, marries, in Washington, D. C., Miss Ellen Boyle Ewing, daughter of his benefactor, Thomas Ewing. September 27, commissioned a captain in the Commissary Department and is afterward stationed in St. Louis and New Orleans. He had already been brevetted a captain for gallant and meritorious services in California, to date from May 30, 1848.

1853—September 6, resigns from the army and enters into the banking business in San Francisco. He subsequently relinquishes banking and makes an unsuccessful attempt at law. His career at this point seems very unpromising.

1859—July, receives notice that he has been elected superintendent of a new military school in Louisiana. He accepts the post, and makes a success of his work.

1861—January 18, owing to the political situation he resigns as superintendent, and comes north. His resignation is regretfully accepted. April 1, enters on his new duties as president of a St. Louis street railway. May 14, commissioned colonel of the Thirteenth Regiment of Infantry, and reports for duty in Washington. Resigns his presidency of the street railway. July, engages as an acting brigade commander of volunteers, with great credit, in the movements connected with the Bull Run operations. He is later commissioned a brigadier-general of volunteers, to date from May 17. August 24, assigned to the Department of the Cumberland, and subsequently relieves General Robert Anderson of its command. His appreciation of the gravity of the military situation in Kentucky causes many critics to think he is demented, although he is soon vindicated. Sherman is finally relieved of command by General Buell.

1862—February 13, ordered to assume command of post at Paducah, Kentucky. April 6 and 7, takes a distinguished part, as a division commander, in the battle of Shiloh. His commission as major-general of volunteers dates from May 1. July 21, enters Memphis, and takes charge of the military administration of the city.

1863—January, performs great service in connection with the capture of Arkansas Post. January to July 4, assists General Grant importantly and brilliantly in the campaign against Vicksburg. His commission as brigadier-general in the United States army dates from July 4. November, makes a distinguished record in the operations around Chattanooga. Afterward marches to the relief of Burnside at Knoxville.

1864—May 5, opening of his celebrated campaign against Atlanta. September 3, Lincoln formally offers the nation's thanks for Sherman's capture of Atlanta. Sherman's commission as a major-general in the Regular Army dates from August 12, 1864. November, troops begin the "March to the Sea," from Atlanta. December 21, fall of Savannah. Sherman is warmly thanked by Lincoln.

1865—February 1, campaign of the Carolinas inaugurated. March 27 and 28, Sherman has his historic talks with Lincoln. April 18, date of the agreement which Sher-

man and General Joseph E. Johnston draw up for a cessation of hostilities. The agreement is repudiated by the authorities at Washington, and another is made. May 24, Sherman and his army take part in the final reviews in Washington to mark the ending of the war.

1866—July 25, commissioned lieutenant-general.

1869—March 8, becomes commander-in-chief of the army.

1884—February 8, retires from active service in the army.

1891—February 14, dies in New York City. He is buried, with impressive services, in St. Louis.

# WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN

## CHAPTER I

### A SCION OF PURITANS

"War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it, and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out. . . . You might as well appeal against the thunder-storm as against these terrible hardships of war."

These incisive, relentless words were addressed by William Tecumseh Sherman to Mayor Calhoun and the City Council of Atlanta, Georgia, in September, 1864, in response to a letter protesting against the determination of Sherman, then the conqueror of Atlanta, to remove her citizens from their homes and send them either to the southward or to the northward. It was likewise in protest of this celebrated order that General Hood, commanding the Confederate Army of Tennessee, had written an impassioned appeal wherein he said, in terms that were doubtless re-echoed in the hearts of nearly every Georgian:

"The unprecedented measure you propose transcends, in studied and ingenious cruelty, all acts

ever before brought to my attention in the dark history of war. In the name of God and humanity I protest, believing that you will find that you are expelling from their homes and firesides the wives and children of a brave people."

This was a terrible indictment that Hood brought against his brilliant antagonist, but Sherman, who was almost as fine a commander of the King's English as he was of a great army, did not hesitate to reply with that uncompromising truth: "War is cruelty!" There is a harsh but convincing ring about this axiom—the ring, as it were, of a clear, hard bell—which suggests the stern dictum of some old-time Puritan. The Puritans had been well hated by the Cavaliers, yet they had had the courage of their convictions. General Sherman, who was fiercely hated by the Cavaliers of the South, had the courage of his convictions, too; so it seems quite natural, when one considers all his qualities, that he should have been descended from rugged Puritan stock.

William Tecumseh Sherman traced back his ancestry (with more certainty, by the way, than some Americans develop their pedigrees) to a prosperous cloth manufacturer of Dedham, Essex County, England, one Edmond Sherman, who is described by the late Senator John Sherman as a "Roundhead" who combined all the faults and virtues of a sectary. "He had the misfortune to live at the time when Charles I undertook to dispense with Parliament, and to impose unlawful

taxes and burdens upon the people of England; and when the privileges of the nobility were enforced with great severity by judges dependent upon the crown." [1]

This Edmond Sherman managed to die with his head on his shoulders, however, and lies buried in Dedham, where a free school endowed by him still gives lustre to his name. After General Sherman had become well-known on the other side of the Atlantic the sexton of Dedham Church wrote to him, calling attention to the "neglected monument" of his ancestor, in the church yard, and asking a contribution toward its repair. The general replied, in effect, that, as his ancestor in England had reposed in peace under a monument for more than two centuries, while some of his more recent ancestors in America were buried in unmarked graves, he thought it better to contribute to tombstones for the latter, "and leave to his English cousins the care of the monuments of their common ancestors in England."

A nephew of Edmond Sherman, Captain John Sherman, emigrated to America, settled in Watertown, Massachusetts, and has had for descendants, among others, Roger Sherman, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, William M. Evarts, George F. Hoar, and Chauncey M. Depew. With "Captain John" there also came two sons of Edmond, and one of them, Samuel, who is referred to in ancient deeds as the "Worshipful

[1] John Sherman's "Recollections."

Master Sherman," was the ancestor of the general. But there is no need further to sketch in detail the highly respectable tree of the Sherman family. The scions of Samuel were sturdy Puritans, who were much venerated in the staid state of Connecticut, and contributed their full quota to the brain and muscle which made New England great and which have kept her a power in the nation until the present day. The Shermans served the commonwealth; worshiped the Lord in their stern, aggressive way; observed the Sabbath strictly, after the melancholy fashion of the times; and duly multiplied.

At last there came into the world (1788) Charles Robert Sherman, who married Mary Hoyt, a lady of Norwalk, Connecticut, and, within a period of nineteen years, became the father of eleven children. The sixth child of this union proved to be the subject of our biography; the eighth child was the late Senator John Sherman.

Charles Robert Sherman was an enterprising and very young lawyer, who, finding the atmosphere of his native state too confined, emigrated with his wife to Lancaster, Ohio (1811). A large portion of Ohio was then a wilderness, and a journey thence from New England was a perilous undertaking. Husband and wife were obliged to make the greater part of the trip on horseback, alternately carrying their first-born, a boy only a few months old, upon a pillow before them. Mrs. Sherman had been gently reared, but she never flinched at the hard-

ships and inconveniences they encountered, and made the journey as undauntedly as did her husband. As she was a plucky woman, who came of plucky forbears, it is not hard to see that her future child, the general, owed at least some of his bravery, moral and physical, to the maternal line of Hoyt.

At the time of the American Revolution the Hoyt family, composed of several brothers, was divided in its allegiance between Toryism and Patriotism. There is a tradition to the effect that "one of the Tory brothers pointed out the house of his brother, at the capture of Norwalk by the British and Tories, as the nest of a rebel, and it was burned to the ground."

The Tory brother no doubt acted from what he conceived to be a profound sense of duty. It was likewise from a profound sense of duty that General Sherman, the descendant of the Hoyts, waged relentless war upon his "brothers" in Georgia and the Carolinas, and caused many a chivalrous but incensed Southerner to brand him for years as a "butcher," or an unnatural monster. These studies in heredity are always interesting—if we choose to believe in it.

But to return to Charles Robert Sherman, the father of our hero. He prospered well in his profession of the law, which he was obliged to follow in much the same way as did Abraham Lincoln, many years later, in the half-settled districts of Illinois. In Ohio it was the necessary custom for lawyers to travel "on circuit," accompanying the

various judges who held court from county to county. They spent a large part of the time on horseback, "their saddle-bags stuffed with papers, documents, briefs, law-books, clothing, and, peradventure, some creature delectation also." A merry, jovial party, they rode through fields and forest, encountering all dangers with good-humored endurance; and, after having reached a town and worked all day in court, they, in company with judge, opposing counsel and sometimes clients, would end with a hot supper and much wit and song at the neighboring inn.

It was while Sherman was leading this spirited existence that his sixth child was born in Lancaster, February 8, 1820. To the new arrival the father gave the name of William Tecumseh. The "Tecumseh" was bestowed in honor of that Indian chieftain who played so important a part in our early frontier history.

In 1823 Charles Robert Sherman was made a judge of the Ohio Supreme Court; six years later he died, rich in honors but poor in the goods of this world. His wife was left with eleven children, and with but little means for their support. It was necessary that the children should be taken temporarily into other homes, and in the breaking up of the family which followed, William Tecumseh Sherman was adopted by Thomas Ewing.

No more fortunate fate could have been desired for the boy. Ewing was a giant, physically and intellectually; he achieved a national reputation,

both as a member of the bar and as a statesman, and the people of Ohio were ever glad to honor him. He was a "self-made" man in the best sense of the word; in his youth he once worked in a salt establishment all day, and studied law in the evening by the light of the furnace fires: in time he became a United States senator, and, later on, a cabinet officer under Presidents William Henry Harrison and Zachary Taylor. He was essentially virile, and just the type of American to give helpful inspiration to any lad who might be sheltered under his roof tree. The fact, too, that Charles Robert Sherman had been his friend, and had extended him more than one kindness, made him anxious to do all he could for the nine-year old William.

In the Ewing home at Lancaster, William Tecumseh remained, as a schoolboy, until the spring of 1836, when Senator Ewing secured for his young protégé a cadetship at the Military Academy at West Point. The delighted youth set out shortly for the east, accomplished the journey by laborious stages, spent a few days in Washington, and finally reached West Point (June 12th), very tired, but still enthusiastic. Here he settled down to the humdrum of study and military duty, attending so well to his work that he was graduated sixth, in a class of forty-two members, in June, 1840. Among his classmates were Stewart Van Vliet, George H. Thomas and Richard S. Ewell.

During his four years' course at West Point he wrote letters to his friends which, by their candor

and directness, give the keynote to his character. He says, for instance: "The last encampment, taken all in all, I think was the most pleasant one I have ever spent, even to me, who did not participate in the dances and balls given every week by the different classes; besides, the duties were altogether of a different nature from any of the previous ones; such as acting as officers upon guard and at artillery drills, practicing at target-firing with long twenty-fours and thirty-twos, mortars, howitzers, etc., as also cavalry exercise, which has been introduced this year. As to lording it over the plebs, to which you referred, I had only one, whom I made, of course, tend to a pleb's duty, such as bringing water, policing the tent, cleaning my gun and accoutrements, and the like, and repaid in the usual and cheap coin—advice."

Through the whole correspondence runs evidence of a keen sense of humor, which was a virtue, be it added, that William's distinguished brother, John, never possessed in any remarkable degree. In another letter, dated April, 1840, the young soldier writes:

"Sometimes it appears that war with England is inevitable; books are thrown in the corner, and broadswords and foils supply their place. Such lunging, cutting and slashing—enough to dispose of at least a thousand British a day; but the mail or recitation soon destroys the illusion with—'It's all a hoax,' or, 'Sir, you've been neglecting your studies.'"

The boy can write seriously, too, and with all the delightful enthusiasm of his years, as when he says: "The nearer we come to that dreadful epoch, graduation day, the higher opinion I conceive of the duties and life of an officer of the United States Army, and the more confirmed in the wish of spending my life in the *service of my country.* Think of that!"

Once he writes some words of advice, quaintly amusing in their air of elderly sobriety, to brother John:

"I hear that you are engaged in speculating in salt, and are waiting for the river to rise to take a load down to Cincinnati. Are you doing this on borrowed capital or not? Or does it interfere in the least with your duties as engineer? If it does I would advise you not to engage in it at any rate, even if you can make a fortune by it; for a reputation for a strict and rigid compliance to one's duties, whatever they may be, is far more valuable than a dozen loads of salt."

Brother John, then scarcely sixteen years old, was a member of an engineer corps of the Muskingum River Improvement Company, and it may easily be imagined that he was not in danger of meeting with a heavy financial disaster. The salt speculation did not succeed, because the unaccommodating river refused to rise at the right moment; but John Sherman's career suffered no blight as a consequence.

In a later letter to John the cadet says, with that

dogmatic air which was afterward to characterize so many of his military utterances :

"I presume the idea of your studying law has been decided upon, . . . so that it would be rather impertinent for me to object in the least; but for my part it would be my last choice. Everybody studies law nowadays, and to be a lawyer without being exceedingly eminent—which it is to be hoped you will be some day—is not a sufficient equivalent for their risks and immense study and labor. However, if you decide upon anything you should immediately commence to carry it into execution. . . . Whether I remain in the army for life, or not, is doubtful, but one thing is certain —that I will never study another profession."

The country owes much to the lad's dislike of the law. He did, as we shall see, become a lawyer for a brief space, but not in a serious way. He was essentially a man of brains, yet there was not in him the stuff of which barristers are made. He lacked the intellectual *finesse* of the less-educated but more subtle Lincoln ; he lacked, too, the art of patience. As a real member of the bar, or as a statesman, he must have proved a brilliant failure. But he knew his limitations, as the future years would show : the time was to come when, unlike the less prudent Grant, he would refuse to listen to the buzzing of the presidential bee. Only once would he try to be a statesman (*in re* the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston) and then he would not succeed.

In June, 1840, when Sherman graduated, he was appointed to a second-lieutenantcy in the Third Regiment of Artillery, and allowed a leave of absence for a visit home. Several months later found him stationed at Fort Pierce, in eastern Florida, where he spent the warm season in idling, fishing, or anathematizing the mosquitoes; and the colder months in assisting in frequent expeditions against the hostile Seminole Indians. To John Sherman the lieutenant described the Seminole war with cynical humor:

"As to the history of the war,—the same as all our Indian wars. A treaty for the removal [of the Indians] is formed by a few who represent themselves as the whole; the time comes, and none present themselves. The Government orders force to be used; the troops in the territory commence, but are so few that they all get massacred. The cowardly inhabitants, instead of rallying, desert their homes, and sound the alarm-call for assistance. An army supposed to be strong enough is sent, seeks and encounters the enemy at a place selected by the latter, and gets a few hundred killed. The Indians retreat, scatter, and are safe. This may be repeated *ad infinitum*. The best officer is selected to direct the affairs of the army,—comes to Florida, exposes himself, does all he can, gets abused by all, more than likely breaks down his constitution, and is glad enough to get out of the scrape."

There is a philosophy in this critique which strongly suggests the history of Indian warfare, (as

to some of its phases, assuredly), in earlier and later times.

But this life in Florida, while affording a certain amount of military experience, was trifling, unheroic and wholly uninviting. Although it called for bravery and endurance on the part of the soldiers, there was nothing very inspiring in potting Seminole bucks or capturing ugly squaws.

In January of 1842 Sherman received his commission as a first-lieutenant. After seeing service at posts in Florida, he was transferred with his company to Fort Morgan, at the entrance of the Bay of Mobile; in the following June he was ordered to Fort Moultrie, in Charleston harbor.

Here he remained for the next four years, enjoying the hospitality of the Charlestonians—who are among the most cordial people of a cordial race—but evidently becoming, at times, somewhat bored with the too-civilized life which he was leading. He little realized that in less than twenty years Charleston would be one of the storm-centres of the greatest war of the nineteenth century. But there was no thought of conflict thus far. Balls, picnicking, horse-racing, boating, fishing, swimming and the like were more familiar experiences to the officers stationed at Charleston, than the use of gunpowder or cannon. The latter were employed only for saluting or practice; bayonets and swords flashed only for routine duty or for dress parade. "A life of this kind," observed young Sherman, "does well enough for a while, but soon surfeits with its flip-

pancy,—mingling with people in whom you feel no permanent interest, smirks and smiles when you feel savage, tight boots when you fancy you would prefer slippers."

But the lieutenant did something more than attend to social duties. He visited his old home in Lancaster, O., on furlough, and became engaged to Miss Ellen Boyle Ewing, the daughter of his patron, Senator Ewing; he made a trip down the Mississippi to New Orleans; he visited a number of Southern cities, thereby unconsciously gaining a knowledge of the South and her people which was to stand him in good stead during the Civil War; and he served on a board appointed by the War Department to investigate certain militia claims. He even read Blackstone and filled himself with other legal lore, not with the idea of adopting the law as a profession, but simply that he might prove more serviceable as a member of army boards or courts-martial.

In the meantime war with Mexico—that war which General Grant long afterward characterized as "unholy" on the part of the United States—began to loom upon the national horizon. Politics became heated, and politicians began to discourse freely. They ever do before a conflict, which they thus help to bring on.

No one watched this horizon with more anxiety than Sherman. He longed for active service with all the zest of a young soldier: if there were to be war over the possible acquisition of Texas, he wished

to be a participant. But for the politicians then, as ever, he cherished in his rugged heart the most profound contempt. When he learned that his brother John had entered into politics out in Ohio, albeit in a modest way, he hardly knew what to think.

"My dear brother," he wrote from Fort Moultrie, "what in the devil are you doing? Stump speaking? I really thought you were too decent, or at least had sufficient pride not to humble and cringe to beg party or popular favor. However, the coming election will sufficiently prove the intelligence and patriotic spirit of the American people, and may deter you from committing a like sin again. . . . For my part I wish Henry Clay to be elected, and should rejoice in his success for various reasons, but I do not permit myself to indulge in sanguine feelings when dependence has to be placed on the pitch and toss game of party elections."

John Sherman, like a good Whig, had been making speeches in favor of Henry Clay, but his eloquence could not save his hero from defeat at the polls. As to his brother William's letter, one must read between the lines to find in it a certain fraternal pride in the sudden prominence of the stump speaker. Whatever the soldier might have to say, in the future, about politics and politicians, he always delighted in John Sherman's success.

It seemed like the irony of fate that Lieutenant Sherman, with all his anxiety for the most active kind of service, should have been obliged to pass in California the period of the Mexican War. During

the spring of 1846 he was assigned to recruiting duty at Pittsburg. In addition to his work there, he opened a sub-recruiting rendezvous at Zanesville, O., and it was while returning from the latter place that he heard the first account of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. It was glorious news to our ambitious officer. No more dull recruiting for him! Some of his colleagues might be very glad to take his berth at Pittsburg, and thus save themselves from the dangers and annoyances of an active campaign, but he would gain fame fighting against the enemy! So he straightway wrote to the Adjutant-General of the army at Washington, asking to be considered as an applicant for active service. He goes on to relate: "Impatient to approach the scene of active operations, without authority (and, I suppose, wrongfully) I left my corporal in charge of the rendezvous, and took all the recruits I had made, about twenty-five, in a steamboat to Cincinnati, and turned them over to Major N. C. McCrea, commanding at Newport Barracks. I then reported in Cincinnati, to the superintendent of the Western recruiting service, Colonel Fanning, an old officer with one arm, who inquired by what authority I had come away from my post." Whereupon Sherman argued that he had supposed Colonel Fanning would want all the recruits that he could get to forward to the army at Brownsville, Texas,—"and I didn't know," he naïvely added, "but that you might want me to go along with them."

Fanning did not see things exactly in this light.

Instead of appreciating the "volunteer zeal" of the young man, he "cursed and swore" at him for leaving his post without orders, and told him to go back at once to Pittsburg.

The crestfallen lieutenant obeyed the order. Soon thereafter he was assigned to Company F, Third Artillery, and sailed for California, via the lengthy route of Cape Horn, in July, 1846. There was no attractive Pullman-car route to the Pacific in those days. This assignment ended all his hopes of winning glory in the contest with Mexico. When he arrived in California he was, in reality, far away from the actual theatre of war, so that he must be content with making a reputation for himself in administrative ability, as acting adjutant-general under General Persifor F. Smith and in other duties.

But those were the days of the "gold fever" in California, when a visit to the territory in any capacity meant a liberal education. In the western slope of the Sierra Nevadas one was almost appalled by the ease with which the miners secured gold. "Many men," Sherman wrote home, "are already become rich, and others are growing so fast. All have their pockets full of gold, and everybody gets more than ten dollars daily for his personal labor, save those in the employ of Government—we are the sufferers. All prices have so advanced that we cannot possibly exist on our pay. . . . The sudden development of so much wealth has played the devil with the country. Everybody has gone there [to the mines], save women and officers. Our soldiers are

deserting and we can't stop it. A tailor won't work a day, nor a shoemaker, nor any other tradesman—all have gone to the mines."

In January, 1850, Sherman returned to the east, bearing despatches to the War Department from General Smith. When in New York, on his way to Washington, he had the honor of dining with General Winfield Scott, the hero of the Mexican War, who was then looked upon as a species of American Napoleon. Scott related various anecdotes connected with the lieutenant's old army comrades in the battles around the City of Mexico, but the recital was not without bitterness for the hearer. "Of course," he records, "I thought it the last and only chance in my day, and that my career as a soldier was at an end." He could not then see that the Mexican War, with the addition of Texas to the Union, and the question, now become a burning one, of the increase of slave territory in the United States, was the prelude to a far fiercer, more tragic contest. General Scott, however, was more prophetic. "Our country is on the eve of a terrible civil war," he asserted to his guest. Sherman was startled; the idea had never occurred to him.

No doubt he dismissed the subject from his mind, nor had he reason to recur to it for several months. He hurried on to Washington, presented his despatches to the Secretary of War, had a pleasant interview with Zachary Taylor, then President, and found that his old guardian, Thomas Ewing, was now Secretary of the Interior. Then,

for a time, all thoughts of war were forgotten, as in May of this year (1850) Lieutenant Sherman married Miss Ewing. The ceremony, which took place in Secretary Ewing's home on Pennsylvania Avenue, had one feature which was enough to make the officer's heart beat with pride. President Taylor, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Thomas H. Benton and many other distinguished Americans were present. A marriage at which Taylor, Webster and Clay were among the eye-witnesses now seems historic. Tradition has it that more than one Washingtonian deplored the fact that so charming and accomplished a girl as Ellen Ewing should have wasted her brilliant matrimonial chances by throwing herself away upon an "unknown lieutenant." The "unknown lieutenant," however, had that supreme faith in himself which we call egotism or inspiration, according as a man becomes a failure or a success; and it does not appear that he developed any conscientious qualms when he bore his bride away, defeating the expectations of more eligible suitors.

After a wedding trip, which included a visit to the Shermans in Ohio, the couple returned to Washington (July 1, 1850). A few days later saw the death of President Taylor. The country was stunned. The passing of the chief magistrate was more than the personal loss to the nation of a fine soldier and an honest man. The question of the extension of slavery, growing out of the new territories acquired from Mexico, was slowly bringing a

crisis upon North and South, and politicians on each side of Mason and Dixon's line nervously asked themselves how the great issues would be affected by a change of administration. Congress was in session; the alarm of many of its members was evident.

"I was present in the Senate gallery," says Sherman, "and saw the oath of office administered to the Vice-President, Mr. Fillmore, a man of splendid physical proportions and commanding appearance; but on the faces of senators and people could easily be read the feelings of doubt and uncertainty that prevailed. . . . It was supposed that Mr. Fillmore, whose home was in Buffalo, would be less liberal than General Taylor to the politicians of the South, who feared, or pretended to fear, a crusade against slavery; or, as was the political cry of the day, that slavery would be prohibited in the territories and in the places exclusively under the jurisdiction of the United States. Events, however, proved the contrary."

Lieutenant Sherman attended the funeral of the President as an aide-de-camp, by request of the Adjutant-General of the army. After the burial, the political caldron began to seethe, and all interest centred around the general compromise measures known as Henry Clay's "Omnibus Bill." [1]

When it became known that Webster would enter Fillmore's cabinet as his Secretary of State,

[1] See Rogers' "Thomas H. Benton" in the American Crisis Series.

and that before leaving the Senate he was to make "one last great speech" on this bill, Lieutenant Sherman resolved to hear it. On the appointed day he went to the Capitol, only to find the galleries of the old Senate Chamber (afterward used by the Supreme Court) filled to overflowing, with a crowd about the door struggling to reach the stairs. Sherman was therefore in danger of missing the speech. In this predicament he sent in his card to Senator Corwin, of Ohio, who had been a great friend of his father's. The senator came out into the lobby from the Senate Chamber, no doubt looking very important, for he was "slated" to become Fillmore's Secretary of the Treasury. The lieutenant modestly explained that he wished to hear Mr. Webster's "last great speech."

"Well," snapped Corwin, "why don't you go into the gallery?"

The soldier said that the gallery was already overflowing.

"Well, what do you want of me?" asked the Senator, still not very encouragingly.

Sherman said he would like to be taken on the floor of the Senate; for he had often seen there, from a coigne of vantage in the gallery, persons no better entitled than himself to the privilege.

"Are you a foreign ambassador?" asked Corwin, with a quizzical expression on his shrewd face.

"No!"

"Or a governor of a state?"

"No."

"Are you a member of the House of Representatives?"

"Certainly not," answered the lieutenant, emphatically.

"Have you ever had a vote of thanks by name?"

"No!"

"Well, these are the only persons privileged to go on the floor of the Senate," said Corwin.

Nothing daunted, Sherman replied: "You know well enough who I am, Senator, and, if you choose, you can take me in."

The senator hesitated for a moment. Then he asked: "Have you any impudence?"

"A reasonable amount, if occasion calls for it," was the ready response.

"Do you think you could become so interested in my conversation as not to notice the doorkeeper?" Here Corwin pointed to the official who kept guard at the Senate door.

Sherman replied diplomatically,—and it was not often, be it said, that he was guilty of the gentle art of diplomacy—that he thought he would have no trouble on that score, if the senator would only tell him one of his funny stories.

Corwin took the lieutenant by the arm, led him up and down the vestibule, talking all the time about some indifferent matter, and thus approached the doorkeeper. The latter, espying a stranger, began to question Sherman with: "Are you a foreign minister? The governor of a state? Are you a member of Congress, sir?"

But Sherman was so much engrossed in the senator's conversation that he neglected to hear the queries, and so the two men passed, arm-in-arm, into the Senate Chamber.

When Sherman had entered the room, Corwin said: "Now you can take care of yourself." The young officer, acting on the hint, took a seat close behind that of Daniel Webster, near General Scott, and heard the famous speech. He was greatly disappointed. This much-heralded effort of the New Englander sounded to his expectant ears "heavy in the extreme," not to say, tiresome. The fire and intensity of a Henry Clay seemed to be sadly missing.

The great slavery question was again compromised and thus it was that Lieutenant Sherman had no reason to believe he would ever see active military service. It seemed as if the nation were to exist, as Lincoln a little later said it could not, "half slave, and half free," and many conscientious men, among them not a few who loathed the institution of slavery, hoped that this might be the case.

## CHAPTER II

### AMONG FRIENDS—AND ENEMIES

For several years after the death of President Taylor the career of Sherman offered little that was picturesque or of absorbing interest. In the autumn of 1850 he was appointed a commissary of subsistence, with the rank of captain, and assigned to duty at St. Louis; in March of the following year he received a commission as captain by brevet "for meritorious services in California during the war with Mexico." In September of 1852 the captain was transferred to New Orleans. All this work was helpful, healthy, and experience-giving, but hardly exciting. The compensation was not large, pecuniarily, and Sherman now had a wife and two children to support. That he finally tired of the dull routine and small pay of the army is shown by the following letter to John Sherman:

"*New Orleans, La., March 4, 1853.*

"Dear Brother:

"I suppose you have heard of my proposed departure for California. It is proper you should have distinct information on this head. . . . I go as a member of the banking house of Lucas and Turner, a branch of that of Lucas and Simonds, of St. Louis. Turner is a particular friend of mine, and is already

in California; he is quite wealthy. Lucas is decidedly the richest property holder in St. Louis and has credit unlimited. Now I, of course, could not have better associates in business, if I am ever to quit the army, and in these prosperous times salaried men suffer. Nevertheless, I was unwilling to resign, and have procured leave of absence for six months, at the end of which time I can best determine what to do."

This letter tells its own story and shows why Captain Sherman was soon back in California, this time as a prosperous banker who had been promised a tempting income and a solid interest in the new firm of Lucas, Turner and Company of San Francisco. The city was then on the top wave of speculative prosperity; in short, it was enjoying what would now be called a typical western "boom."

"This is the most extraordinary place on earth," Sherman wrote home. "Large brick and granite houses fill the site where stood the poor, contemptible village; wharves extend a mile out, along which lie ships and steamers of the largest class. . . . My business here is the best going, provided we have plenty of money. Without it, I stick to Uncle Sam most emphatically."

But the writer did not "stick to Uncle Sam." The house of Lucas, Turner and Company promised to transact a large business, at good profits, while life in the army apparently held out nothing more seductive than sleepy garrison duty and poor pay. So Sherman returned to the east in the midsummer

of 1853, promptly resigned from the army, and then went back to California, accompanied by his wife and children. The ex-captain now settled down to the life of a financier: he fondly believed that his military career, honorable but uneventful, had come to a commonplace end. From now on, he thought, he would devote himself to winning the much needed income for his family.

Events, however, were leading up to different results: politics had grown heated once more; shrewd observers began to see that the "Compromises of 1850" would not save the country from further agitation of the slavery question. In the South the leaders were fast growing angry; in the North, more particularly in New England, the Abolitionists were doing all they could, by their violence of speech, to hasten dreaded times.

Sherman watched the course of events with consuming interest. One reads his trenchant views of affairs in the letters to his brother, John. Let us make several brief quotations:

"As a young member [of Congress] I hope you will not be too forward, especially on the question of slavery, which, it seems, is rising more and more every year into a question of real danger, notwithstanding the compromises. Having lived a good deal in the South I know practically more of slavery than you do. If it were a new question no one now would contend for introducing it; but it is an old and historical fact that you must take as you find it. . . . *Negroes free won't work tasks, of*

*course*, and rice, sugar, and certain kinds of cotton cannot be produced except by forced negro labor. Slavery being a fact is chargeable upon the past; it cannot by our system, be abolished except by force and consequent breaking up of our present Government. As to restraining its further growth, the North have a perfect right to their full vote, and should, as a matter of course, use it. . . . Let slavery extend along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, but not in the high salubrious prairies of the West. It was a mistake to make Missouri a slave state; but it was done long ago, and now there is no remedy except in the state itself. Slavery can never exist here, or north of us, so the North now has the power, and can exercise it in prudence and moderation." (November 30, 1854. The italics are ours.)

"Time and facts are accomplishing all you aim at; *viz.*, the preponderance of the free over the slave states. This is so manifest that the politicians and people of the South feel it, and consequently are tetchy and morose. . . . The repeal of the [Missouri] Compromise was unfortunate, but being done, to repeal it would only produce feeling and no good. Kansas will be a free state, so will Missouri and Kentucky in time; but the way to accomplish that is to let things go on as now, showing the eminent prosperity of the free states, whilst the slave states get along slowly. Self-interest is the great motor. . . . Therefore to accomplish any political end, no provoking speeches are neces-

sary, but on the contrary defeat the object in view." (March 20, 1856.)

"The Nebraska bill was a mistake on the part of the South; a vital mistake that will do them more harm than all the violent Abolitionists in the country. . . . My idea is to leave our present limits alone until we have more population, and then to make other adjacent territories pay for coming in the Union."

"I see you are placed on the Committee of Foreign Relations, which is deemed a compliment. Since you are embarked in politics I shall watch your course with deep interest, and of all things I shall expect you to avoid localism, and to act as a representative of a great developing nation rather than a mere emblem of the freaks and prejudices of a small constituency."

"Since my resignation I have kept purposely aloof from all parties, either one way or the other; being in a business where large interests are at stake, I cannot act with that decision otherwise that would suit me."

"Unless people, both North and South, learn more moderation, we'll see sights in the way of civil war. Of course the North have the strength and must prevail, though the people of the South could and would be desperate enough. I hope in Congress you will resolve yourself into the fighting branch and work off some of the surplus steam that is threatening to blow up the Union."

These glimpses of Sherman's opinions on the

burning issues of the day, however brief, are very interesting, in that they show the views of many like him, who, while neither condoning nor wishing to approve the system of slavery, yet hoped that the question would be allowed to settle itself peaceably,—first, by compromise, and finally by abolition through a process of gradual but sure extinction. Nor was he at any time, then or later, what the Southerners were wont to call a "negro worshipper." He desired to see the black men free, as the years should run on, but he had no illusions about them. Had he not lived in the South? Well-meaning but impracticable enthusiasts for negro equality and other impossible conditions are usually residents of sections where the negro himself is little in evidence.

Time passed quickly, in California, for the rapid life of the people, with its strange contrasts —fortunes made and lost in the twinkling of an eye, honesty, rascality, shrewdness, recklessness, wealth, penury, lawlessness, mob-violence, occasional lynchings, and what not?—furnished a landscape of variegated if somewhat dangerous coloring. Some of this coloring or picturesqueness was to be found in what was perhaps the most exciting incident of Sherman's civilian career,—nothing less, indeed, than a sensational "run" on the bank of Lucas, Turner and Company. A rival banking house, that of Page, Bacon and Company, had been forced to suspend a day or two previously, owing to a "run" of its own; and the mer-

curial citizens of San Francisco, their confidence in financial institutions rudely shaken, nervously asked themselves whether other banks, too, might not collapse. Another bank did suspend at once, and Sherman, who was now practically the head of his own firm, coolly prepared for the onslaught which he knew would be made by the depositors.

The "run" came, surely enough, the next morning. Punctually to the minute the bank opened its doors, and an hysterical crowd rushed in. "As usual, the most noisy and clamorous were men and women who held small certificates; still, others with larger accounts, were in the crowd, pushing forward for their balances." All claims were promptly met. Several friends of Sherman merely asked his word of honor that their money was safe, and, on receiving the necessary assurance, went away without drawing it out. Others accepted gold bars in lieu of coin. Out in the street charitable persons were making bets as to the hour at which Lucas, Turner and Company would close their doors;—and all the time other firms were reported to be in trouble.

Sherman remained cool and confident, showing the same presence of mind and mental poise that he afterward exhibited so nobly in military crises. He even detected the humor of the situation. "This run on the bank," he relates in his "Memoirs," "presented all the features, serious and comical, usual to such occasions. At our counter happened that identical case, narrated of others, of the French-

man who was nearly squeezed to death in getting to the counter, and, when he received his money, did not know what to do with it. 'If you got the money I no want him; but if you no got him, I want it like the devil.' "

Many depositors shared the feelings of the Frenchman. When they received their money and found the bank still solvent, they began to re-deposit it. In short, the pluck and apparent placidity of Sherman, combined with the precautions he had taken to keep the bank in funds, saved the day. The firm of Lucas, Turner and Company emerged from the ordeal triumphantly, amid the wreckage of other banks and other fortunes. But public confidence in general finances was greatly shaken; business became unsettled; and finally the San Francisco house of Lucas, Turner and Company wound up its affairs in honorable fashion. Its closing was done at the suggestion of Sherman, who reported to Mr. Lucas, the senior partner, that the latter's capital could be used much more profitably in St. Louis. In July, 1857, the ex-captain was established in New York, as manager of a new Wall Street firm, bearing the old name of Lucas, Turner and Company.[1]

Owing to the failure of Mr. Lucas, in St. Louis, the new house was soon obliged to go out of business.

[1] Before dismissing Sherman's California experiences it may be noted that he was commissioned major-general of the Second Division of the State Militia, and narrowly escaped an exciting brush with a local Vigilance Committee, which tried to set itself above the law.

It is pleasant to record, however, that when the affairs of the firm were straightened out, as they speedily were, no one lost a cent through the crash. Lucas and Sherman emerged with honor unscathed.

Sherman now went back to San Francisco, at the request of Mr. Lucas, to make a final liquidation of the business of the California house. In the latter part of July, 1858, he was again at his old home, in Lancaster, Ohio. "I was then unhampered," he records, "but the serious and greater question remained,—what was I to do to support my family, consisting of a wife and four children, all accustomed to more than the average comforts of life?" In writing to John Sherman, about this time, he made two remarkable prophecies, one of which was to come true in several years, while the other would not be verified until he had gone over to the great army of the dead :

"I think in the next ten years we will have plenty to do in the war line—Mormon war, civil broils and strife, contests for political power, growing out of slavery and other exciting topics, and last *a war with Spain*, resulting in the conquest of Cuba."

Events were certainly moving apace ; history was being made rapidly. Already the present Republican party was an accomplished fact. Politics, however, were hardly so engrossing to our ex-officer and ex-banker as the thought of mouths to be fed. In this predicament, while discussing "what to do next," Sherman went out to Leavenworth, Kansas, as a partner in a law firm established by two of

Thomas Ewing's sons. He was not expected to give more than passing attention to the purely legal business of the firm; his duties were to be in the line of collections and such details as his banking experience had qualified him for more eminently. Yet it was expedient that Sherman should take out a "license" as a lawyer. "What examination must I submit to?" he inquired of Judge Lecompte. "None at all," replied his honor; "I will admit you on the ground of general intelligence!" Thus Sherman became a member of the bar.

Fortunately for his country, as it came to pass, Sherman's income from the firm proved hardly sufficient for the wants of his growing family. He looked around for something more to do. Being a man who always stared things frankly in the face, he must have asked himself more than once whether life had been a failure. As good luck would have it, a military college was about to be organized near Alexandria, Louisiana. Sherman applied for the position of superintendent, was elected thereto, and started for his new scene of work in the autumn of 1859. If "civil broils" could only be averted, he would doubtless spend many a year in the South.

It is significant of the bitterness engendered by the Civil War that two of Sherman's biographers (the authors of "Sherman and His Campaigns," published in 1865) should have regarded his appointment as superintendent as part of a great conspiracy of the Southern leaders. Here is the scheme these

biographers set forth, as it affected Captain Sherman: During President Buchanan's administration there was started throughout the slave states a movement for the reorganization of the militia, the establishment and enlargement of state military academies, and the collection of arms and other munitions of war. The Federal Secretary of War, Mr. Floyd, "thoroughly in the interests of the pro-slavery conspirators, aided them by sending to the arsenals in the slave states large quantities of the national arms and military supplies," and caused large sales of arms to be made secretly, at low prices, to the agents of these states. "The pro-slavery leaders then began, quietly, to select and gather round them the men whom they needed, and upon whom they thought they could rely." Among the men thus fixed upon, according to this ingenious theory, was Captain William Tecumseh Sherman. "Recognizing his aptitude in military art and science, the leaders in Louisiana determined to place him at the head of the new State Military Academy at Alexandria. It was explained to him that the object of establishing the school was to aid in suppressing negro insurrections; to enable the state to protect her borders from the Indian incursions, then giving trouble in Arkansas and Texas; and to form a nucleus for defense, in case of an attack by a foreign enemy."

The question as to what extent,—how much or how little—the Southern leaders prepared for the inevitable war—now, happily, merely an academic

question—need not be discussed here. But it is absurd to think that there was any plot to bring Sherman to Louisiana for the purpose of winning him over to Southern allegiance. Had he ultimately thrown in his fortune with the Confederacy, Louisianians would have been pleased, naturally enough, but there was nothing of the underhand in the appointment. At the time the above-mentioned biography was written, however, Northerners and Southerners were not devising compliments about each other; the "era of good feeling" had not yet dawned.

On New Year's Day of 1860 the "Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Academy" was opened "auspiciously," with an attendance of about sixty cadets who were to be educated on lines as near as possible to the West Point standard. Everything promised a happy and congenial existence for the superintendent, who was taking a deep interest in the progress of the new institution. But as the weeks went on he began to see that, owing to the increasing political turmoil, his position was not a bed of roses. John Sherman was a candidate, in the national House of Representatives, for the speakership, against Bocock, of Virginia, and as he was regarded in the South as an Abolitionist—"the most horrible of all monsters"—a great many people in Louisiana began to look upon his brother, the captain, with a good deal of suspicion. Was it wise, they asked, to have the brother of an Abolitionist at the head of their military college?

One evening, at Baton Rouge, Sherman attended a large dinner party given by Thomas O. Moore, the Governor of Louisiana. A number of men prominent in the official life of the state were present. When the ladies had left the table, and the wine and coffee were circulating, the superintendent heard his name being frequently used at the end of the board over which the host presided. At length the governor called to him : "Captain Sherman, you can readily understand that with your brother the Abolitionist candidate for speaker, some of our people wonder that you should be here, at the head of an important state institution. Now, you are at my table, and I assure you of my confidence. Won't you speak your mind freely on this question of slavery, that so agitates the land? You are under my roof, and, whatever you say, you have my protection."

This was a sufficient challenge to Sherman. He answered : "Governor Moore, you mistake in calling my brother, John Sherman, an Abolitionist. We have been separated since childhood—I in the army, and he pursuing his profession of law in northern Ohio, and it's possible we may differ in general sentiment ; but I deny that he is considered at home an Abolitionist. Although he prefers the free institutions under which he lives to those of slavery which prevail here, he would not of himself take from you by law or force any property whatever, even slaves."

"Give us your own view of slavery as you see it

here, and throughout the South," replied the governor.

This was, in substance, the superintendent's answer: "The people of Louisiana are hardly responsible for slavery, because they have inherited it. I have found here two distinct conditions of slavery, domestic and field hands. The domestic slaves, employed by the families, are probably better treated than any slaves on earth; but the condition of the field hands is far different, depending more on the temper and disposition of their masters and overseers than are those employed about the house. Were I a citizen of Louisiana and a member of the legislature I would deem it wise to bring the legal condition of the slaves more near the status of human beings under all Christian and civilized governments. In sales of slaves made by the state I would forbid the separation of families, letting the father, mother and children be sold together to one person, instead of each to the highest bidder. Again, I would advise the repeal of the statute which enacted a severe penalty for even the owner to teach his slave to read and write, because that actually qualified property and took away a part of its value. For instance, there's the case of Henry Sampson, once the slave of Colonel Chambers, of Rapides Parish, who went to California as the servant of an officer of the army, and who was afterward employed by me in my bank in San Francisco. At first he could not read or write, and I could only afford to pay him $100 a month; but he

was taught to read and write by Reilly, our bank-teller, when his services became worth $250 a month, which enabled him to buy his own freedom, and that of his brother and his family."

One of the listeners (Sherman thought it was Attorney-General Hyams) struck the table with his fist, making the wine glasses ring, as he exclaimed: "By Heaven, he is right!" Then followed for an hour a discussion which was pursued to its finish in all moderation and fairness on both sides.

There is no doubt that many a Southerner would have been only too glad to see slavery abolished then and there, had he been able to divine how it could be done without involving him in financial ruin. But the most rabid Abolitionists in the North refused to see this financial phase of the situation, although they would have been the very first to cry out had any one sought to attack their own vested interests.

Sherman still hoped for moderation and compromise on the part of all concerned. "It would be the height of folly to drive the South to desperation," he tells John Sherman, "and I hope, after the fact is admitted that the North has the majority and right to control national matters, they will so use their power as to reassure the South that there is no intention to disturb the actual existence of slavery. . . . If our country falls into anarchy it will be Mexico, only worse. Disunion would be civil war, and you politicians would lose all charm.

Military men would then step on the tapis, and you would have to retire."

As the year 1860 progressed the position of Captain Sherman in Alexandria became more and more strained—"too strained for comfort." The election of Lincoln to the presidency in November, only increased the storm-clouds. "All attempts at reconciliation will fail," said Sherman several weeks later. As he was determined to remain true to the cause of the North, in case of open rupture, he lamented that his probable resignation from the Military Academy would make his fourth change of occupation in four years, "each time from calamity." And John Sherman was writing to him imperatively from Washington: "The very moment you feel uncomfortable in your position in Louisiana, come away. Don't, for God's sake, subject yourself to any slur, reproach, or indignity."

The break soon came. South Carolina seceded in December, and Mississippi soon afterward; Louisiana was now ripe for revolt from the Union. Early in January, 1861, Governor Moore ordered the seizure of all the United States forts at the mouth of the Mississippi and Lake Pontchartrain, and of the United States arsenal at Baton Rouge. It seemed the irony of fate that 2,000 muskets, 300 rifles, and a large amount of cartridges, which formed part of the contents of the arsenal, should have been sent, after its quick surrender, to the custody of Captain Sherman, in Alexandria. "This grated hard on my feelings," he says, "and on

counting the arms I noticed that they were packed in the old familiar boxes, with the 'U. S.' simply scratched off." It was, therefore, not long before he had despatched to Governor Moore the following letter, which is a classic in its way:

"SIR: As I occupy a *quasi*-military position under the laws of the state, I deem it proper to acquaint you that I accepted such position when Louisiana was a state in the Union, and when the motto of this seminary was inserted in marble over the main door: 'By the Liberality of the General Government of the United States—The Union: *Esto Perpetua.*'

"Recent events foreshadow a great change, and it becomes all men to choose. If Louisiana withdraw from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the Constitution as long as a fragment of it survives; and my longer stay here would be wrong in every sense of the word.

"In that event, I beg you will send or appoint some authorized agent to take charge of the arms and munitions of war belonging to the state, or advise me what disposition to make of them.

"And furthermore, as President of the Board of Supervisors, I beg you to take immediate steps to relieve me as superintendent, the moment the state determines to secede, for on no earthly account will I do any act or think any thought hostile to or in defiance of the old Government of the United States.

"With great respect, your obedient servant,

"W. T. SHERMAN,

"*Superintendent.*"

Nothing could be more admirable in its construc-

tion, temper and air of polite yet dignified adhesion to Federal principles than this letter. It was a graceful yet decisive move to relieve the writer from an untenable and illogical situation.

In addition to this official letter Sherman sent a private one to the governor wherein he said frankly: "I have never been a politician, and therefore undervalue the excited feelings and opinions of present rulers, but I do think, if this people cannot execute a form of government like the present, that a worse one will result. I will keep the cadets as quiet as possible. They are nervous, but I think the interest of the state requires them here, guarding this property and acquiring a knowledge which will be useful to your state in after times."

Throughout this whole episode Sherman acted with the scrupulousness that always marked him, and with a tact which he did not always choose to show. It was argued in certain Southern quarters during the war that he had been guilty of a breach of hospitality in taking up arms against the Secessionists, but that was merely a criticism engendered by the acrimony of civil strife, and, possibly, by disappointment that so accomplished an army officer had been lost to their cause.

The moderation of the captain in his views on the slavery issue, his hopes for compromise, his want of sympathy for the fanatical "negro worshippers," and the fact that he understood the intricate economic conditions existing in the slave

states, may have made some of the Louisianians hope that he would throw in his lot south of Mason and Dixon's line. And here one is confronted with an interesting if somewhat idle query. Had Sherman been a resident of Louisiana for, say, ten years, at the outbreak of the "late unpleasantness," and had he come to look at things more and more from the view-point of Dixie, might he not have decided, when the final word came, to fight for his "adopted state"? Some readers may indignantly cry, "No; it is impossible! What an idea!" But let it not be forgotten that environment moulds even the strongest men, and much talking of politics may wear away even a native of Ohio. There is certainly something entertainingly paradoxical in the thought of Sherman enlisted under the "stars and bars," and a possible substitution of "Marching through Pennsylvania" for "Marching through Georgia!"

One thing is certain. The authorities of the Military Academy, including the governor and other officials, parted from Sherman with a sense of deep personal regret, which they showed by adopting resolutions, hardly less laudatory than the minutes that boards of bank directors are wont to adopt for their deceased presidents or cashiers. The superintendent said farewell to Alexandria and proceeded to New Orleans, where he wound up his connection with the financial affairs of the institution. His accounts were audited and found to be correct; he was now ready to go North with a clear

conscience and the esteem of the men who were to be his political enemies for four long years.

At the hotel in New Orleans he sat at the table with Colonel (afterward General) Braxton Bragg and Mrs. Bragg. Jefferson Davis and Alexander H. Stephens had just been elected President and Vice-President, respectively, of the Confederacy. During one of the meals Mrs. Bragg, in referring to a recent military appointment made by Mr. Davis, said: "You know that my husband is not a favorite with the new President."

Captain Sherman's mind was dwelling upon Abraham Lincoln as the new President, so he answered: "I didn't know that Colonel Bragg had ever met Mr. Lincoln."

"I didn't mean *your* President, but *our* President," pointedly replied Mrs. Bragg. It was evident, although Fort Sumter had not yet been fired upon, that the conflict between the states had already earnestly begun.

While in New Orleans, Sherman visited Colonel A. C. Myers, quartermaster, who had resigned from the United States army, and accepted service under the Confederacy. Myers occupied his old office in the Lafayette Square Building, with the letters "U. S." still plainly in evidence on his desk, papers and articles of furnishing. "Don't you feel funny?" asked the captain.

"Why no, not at all," replied Myers. "The thing was inevitable; secession is a complete success; there will be no war; the two governments

will settle all matters of business in a friendly spirit, and each will go on in its allotted sphere without further confusion." Indeed, there were many good people, North and South, who thought that the Union would be split in twain without the loss of a drop of blood. This mood is reflected in the memorable lines by Oliver Wendell Holmes on the secession of South Carolina:

"She has gone—she has left us in passion and pride,—
Our stormy-browed sister so long at our side!
She has torn her own star from our firmament's glow,
And turned on her brother the face of a foe!

"O Caroline, Caroline, child of the sun,
We can never forget that our hearts have been one,—
Our foreheads both sprinkled in Liberty's name,
From the fountain of blood with the finger of flame!

. . . . . .

"Has our love all died out? Have its altars grown cold?
Has the curse come at last which the fathers foretold?
Then Nature must teach us the strength of the chain
That her petulant children would sever in vain.

"Go then, our rash sister! afar and aloof,—
Run wild in the sunshine, away from our roof;
But when your heart aches, and your feet have grown sore,
Remember the pathway that leads to our door."[1]

In this poem we have regret at the secession of "Sister Caroline," and the prophecy that she will finally come back into the Union; but there is no

[1] "Brother Jonathan's Lament for Sister Caroline."

thought that her conduct will cost the lives of thousands upon thousands of men on both sides.

It was this "Lament" that brought forth, in reply, the famous verses which began :

> "Farewell ! We must part ; we have turned from the land
> Of our cold-hearted brother, with tyrannous hand,
> Who assumed all our rights as a favor to grant,
> And whose smiles ever covered the sting of a taunt."

Speaking of the sentiment in New Orleans at this time, Sherman records that the people there considered that Louisiana, by a mere declaration of the fact, had become a free and independent state,—free to enter into any new alliance or combination which she chose. "Men were being enlisted and armed, to defend the state, and there was not the least evidence that the national administration designed to make any effort, by force, to vindicate the national authority. I therefore bade adieu to all my friends, and, about the 25th of February (1861) took my departure by railroad for Lancaster, via Cairo and Cincinnati."

Sherman had closed another phase of his career. He was now about to emerge upon a stage where he would become, in time, one of the commanding figures, as well as one of the most hated of men among many of his old friends in the Southern states.

## CHAPTER III

### THE COMING OF THE STORM

SHERMAN went northward with feelings of a gloomy nature. During his stay in Louisiana he had maintained his family comfortably in Lancaster, O.; but now his salary as superintendent was at an end, and once more he was compelled to ask: "How am I to support my wife and little ones?" Even if civil war should come, he did not see how it could give him an employment generous enough to provide for those dependent upon him. He seems, at this time, to have been disposed to take a bitter, sarcastic view of the country's situation. He argued that the national crisis had been brought about by the politicians, North as well as South, and he believed, as a matter of ironic justice, that they should "fight it out" themselves. There was always that same loathing, wherein one insensibly sympathizes, for the mischief-making of the average "statesman," selfish and dangerous of tongue.

On the way home to Lancaster, the captain listened carefully to the talking, ofttimes loud and violent, of his fellow passengers. In the South, as he tells us, the people were earnest and angry in their determination to break their bonds with the old Union; whereas to the northward he saw nothing

but apathy. It looked to him as if the people of the North would tamely submit to secession. "The orators of the South used, openly and constantly, the expressions that there would be no war, and that a *lady's thimble would hold all the blood to be shed.*"

On reaching Lancaster, and rejoining his family, Sherman found two important letters awaiting him. One was from his brother, John Sherman, urgently asking him to come to Washington; the other was a hint from St. Louis that he would, if he so desired, be made president of the Fifth Street Passenger Railway in that city, at a salary of $2,500 a year. Twenty-five hundred dollars was a much larger income before the war than it is in this luxurious decade; Sherman resolved to accept the position. But first he would visit John Sherman, as requested, and talk over the national situation with him.

He reached Washington just after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. The capital presented a curious spectacle of unrest; the people there acted as if they were living on the edge of a volcano, and knew not at what minute an eruption might occur. The Southerners alone seemed confident, as their representatives and senators were publicly withdrawing from Congress to join the new congress of the Confederacy.

John Sherman, now a senator from Ohio, soon took his brother to call on the new President. The interview was not an altogether satisfactory one to

the visitors. Perhaps Lincoln was not in a good humor, owing to the cares of his position, or the importunity of those office-seekers who besieged him during the early months of his administration.

"Mr. President," said the senator, introducing the visitor, "this is my brother, who is just up from Louisiana; he may give you some information you want."

"Ah!" said Lincoln, carelessly, "how are you getting along down there?"

"They think they are getting along swimmingly," answered Sherman, in a sarcastic vein; "they are preparing for war!"

"Oh, well, I guess we'll manage to keep house," said the President, laconically.

Sherman, as it may be imagined, was "sadly disappointed" at what seemed to be the singular indifference of Lincoln to the condition of affairs in the South. John Sherman, in his "Recollections," says, apropos of this interview, that while Lincoln did say, "I guess we'll manage to keep house," he also expressed a hope, which William T. Sherman knew to be delusive, that the danger would pass by, "and that the Union would be restored by a peaceful compromise." According to the senator, this was undoubtedly the idea then uppermost in the minds of both the President and Mr. Seward. "At this time the public mind in the North was decidedly in favor of concessions to the South."

When the two brothers were on their way back

from the White House, William Tecumseh burst forth into abuse of the politicians. "You have all got things in a ——— of a fix!" he growled, using an expression more forcible than complimentary, "and you may get them out as you best can. As for me, I am going to St. Louis to take care of my family, and will have no more to do with it."

John Sherman begged his brother to be more patient, but the latter only answered that he would *not* be patient; he "had no time to wait"; he was "off for St. Louis." And off to St. Louis he went forthwith, after making a stop at Lancaster for his family. On the first of April he was installed president of the Fifth Street Passenger Railway. He tried hard to settle down to his prosaic duties, without thought of the storm that was gathering over the nation, but it was no easy work for a man of his decided temperament to ignore facts. Events were moving apace, for Major Anderson, at Fort Sumter, was soon to be bombarded, and the torch of war would then be aflame. The struggle was now on for the possession of the border states. Missouri had become uncertain ground; in St. Louis, where the excitement was at the highest pitch, the Confederate flag was publicly displayed from the "Rebel" headquarters at Fifth and Pine Streets. In Lindell's Grove, at the end of Olive Street, there was a "state camp of instruction" which was, beyond doubt, in the interests of the Southern cause, and "designed to be used against the national authority in the event of the general government's attempting to

coerce the Southern Confederacy." In the arsenal were several companies of regulars, under the command of Captain Lyon. Heated discussions took place every night at the hotels and taverns; neighbors of long-time intimacy began to quarrel; the newspapers grew hysterical; threats of violence against either "Rebels" or "Abolitionists" were heard on the respective sides.

At this stage of the turmoil Sherman received the following telegram, under date of April 6th:

"Will you accept the chief clerkship of the War Department? We will make you Assistant Secretary of War when Congress meets.

"MONTGOMERY BLAIR,
"*Postmaster-General.*"

To this communication Sherman briefly replied by telegraph: "I cannot accept." He supplemented the refusal by a letter to the postmaster-general, in which he explained that he had just accepted a position as president of a street railway company; that he had rented a house and incurred other obligations, and did not feel at liberty to make any change. He added that he wished the new administration "all success in its almost impossible task of governing this distracted and anarchical people."

Sherman's experience upon his visit to Lincoln may not have been conducive to an enthusiastic reception of Blair's offer, but Mrs. Thorndike is right when she says that "in writing to explain his re-

fusal he does not state the real reason, which was undoubtedly that he preferred active service," in the field.[1]

John Sherman thoroughly approved of his brother's determination not to take a civilian position under the government, for he had great faith in William's ability as a soldier. "You ought to hold yourself in reserve," the senator quickly writes from Washington. "If troops are called for, as they surely will be in a few days, organize a regiment or brigade, either in St. Louis or Ohio, and you will then get into the army in such a way as to ensure promotion. By all means take advantage of the present disturbances to get into the army, where you will at once put yourself in a high position for life. I know that promotion and every facility for advancement will be cordially extended by the authorities." The writer adds what, in view of the gloomy outlook, was a wonderful and daring prophecy: "Whatever you may think of the signs of the times, the government will rise from this strife greater, stronger, and more prosperous than ever. It will display energy and military power."

It was this courageous faith in the future, really sublime in its way, that filled at least a few Northern hearts when the nation's life seemed most in jeopardy, and that brought about, in the end, the restoration of the Union. It was this same sublime courage that inspired the Southerners, no less American than ourselves, to fight valiantly until they had

[1] *Vide* "The Sherman Letters," p. 109.

hardly the clothes to shield their nakedness nor food to put in their starving bodies.

Two days after the deliverance of this prophecy Fort Sumter surrendered—the great four years' struggle had begun. John Sherman wrote his brother at once: "We are on the eve of a terrible war. Every man will have to choose his position. You, fortunately, have the military education, prominence, and character, that will enable you to play a high part in the tragedy. You can't avoid taking such a part. Neutrality and indifference are impossible. . . . The administration intends to stand or fall by the Union, the entire Union, and the enforcement of the laws. I look for preliminary defeats, for the rebels have arms, organization, unity; but this advantage will not last long."

There was no need to urge William Tecumseh Sherman, once he saw any chance of real fighting. He only wanted the actual thing,—not a burial among the archives of a Washington department. He was soon writing to Simon Cameron, the new Secretary of War:

"Dear Sir: I hold myself now, as always, prepared to serve my country in the capacity for which I was trained. I did not and will not volunteer for three months, because I cannot throw my family on the cold charity of the world. But for the three years' call, made by the President, an officer can prepare his command and do good service.

"I will not volunteer as a soldier, because right-

fully or wrongfully I feel unwilling to take a mere private's place, and having for many years lived in California and Louisiana, the men are not well enough acquainted with me to elect me to my appropriate place.

"Should my services be needed, the records of the War Department will enable you to designate the station in which I can render most service."

Sherman showed his keen common sense in sending this letter to Cameron. For some of his best friends, not to mention several officials in Washington, had begun to doubt his loyalty. He was a frank and voluble talker, when in the mood, never fearing to call a spade a spade ; and it is more than possible that his perpetual damning of the politicians, whom he held responsible for the crisis of affairs, may have tended to make the more radical Northerners look upon him with distrust. Furthermore, he had no inclination to think that a man was in danger of the eternal fires simply because he owned slaves—and we know that some pious people looked upon a slave-owner as on a moral par with Satan. We can easily imagine Sherman anathematizing an Abolitionist as a "mischievous fellow," and having one of his hearers run away to spread the news that the speaker was "wobbling" in his allegiance.

In this connection John Cannon wrote of Sherman several years later, at the close of the war, that "he was not reticent, like Grant, but could dispute or make speeches by the hour. His oratory was robust

and forcible in the highest degree, and, when moved, the workings of his features attested the vehemence of his feelings. . . . His nature was so fervent, his manner at times so eccentric, that many persons set him down as insane. But his soldiers did not think so. His daring courage was of itself sufficient to give him popularity among them." [1]

It is Cannon, likewise, who gives us so graphic a picture of Sherman's personality that we may well quote it here. He was nearly six feet high, his frame muscular, though somewhat lean; his constitution one of iron. His face was of "the true North American type, showing the English descent, yet with every feature modified." His complexion was "blonde, though sufficiently weather-beaten; his hair light; his eyes light blue, bright and quick, and gleaming very fiercely in his fits of anger. He was a great smoker, and in mentioning this fact some observers say that his was just the temperament on which the use of tobacco has a bad effect—whence some of the excitement in his nature. He was by no means averse to spirituous refreshment either, but in that never to excess. He was, like Grant, careless of his personal attire; wore a dingy uniform on campaign, and never buttoned up his tunic to the chin." His prominent forehead, it is added, was the feature that most impressed observers. It might have been said, too, that this face,

[1] "Grant's Campaign for the Capture of Richmond"; a most interesting narrative.

beaming with intelligence, was undeniably harsh, or at least serious, in repose, but could soften wonderfully when in animated conversation with congenial associates. Indeed, it was the face of a man who could wage war most relentlessly and who yet had, withal, a softer side to his nature, which was by no means impervious to what the writers of the eighteenth century floridly called "sentiment."

One biographer, Captain David P. Conyngham, speaks of Sherman's face as "sharp and angular," covered with a short, grizzly beard, of a sandy color. "His eyes are piercing, with something of a harsh, cruel expression about them. His manner of speaking is rapid, and rather sarcastic."

The general, as the writer of the present memoir recalls him, many years after the war, was an interesting, although by no means a handsome man, to gaze upon. His features, strongly marked and furrowed, proclaimed that their possessor had helped to make history; his eyes were of the kind to kindle alternately with the varied lights of anger and pleasure; his nose was pugnacious; his mouth, its expression softened by age, must once have been terribly unyielding; his manner was nervous but sincere; and his whole bearing that of a man who thoroughly believed in himself and his opinions.

Some men achieve success by diplomatic means, by pliancy to the views of those above them, and, in short, through infinite pains to find out which "way the wind blows." Others achieve the same results through an indomitable energy of character

that commands respect because of its utter indifference to consequences. The face of Sherman was the face of the latter class. He was bound to make an impress on the world in some form. Had he not succeeded he would surely have gone down into history as a brilliant failure—a defiant, censorious, uncomfortable martyr to his honest egotism.

So much for Sherman's personal attributes. They had a sort of rugged charm of their own, and formed a correct barometer of the rugged soul within.

Sherman's letter of explanation to Simon Cameron was written on May 8, 1861. This was a little more than three weeks after Lincoln, stirred into action by the bombardment and fall of Sumter, had issued his call for 75,000 volunteers with whom to put down the Rebellion. It will be noted that in his letter Sherman offers to enlist for three years—a proposition which many persons considered startling, not to say, absurd, at that time. It was now the fashion in certain quarters in the North, to think that, if the seceding states were coerced back into the Union, the process would take only a few months. But Sherman, once so hopeful of compromise, had made up his mind that the South, now very much in earnest, would fight to the bitter end for what she chose to call her freedom. He knew that the Southerners were a brave people. Were they not, when all was said, Americans, just as the inhabitants of Massachusetts, or New York, or Pennsylvania, were Americans? He criticised, too, Lincoln's call because the "best of men could be

made only indifferent soldiers in three months," and the best of soldiers could accomplish nothing in three months in such a country as ours.

The answer to the letter came indirectly but none the less surely. On the 14th of May Sherman received a dispatch from Washington announcing his appointment as colonel of the Thirteenth Regular Infantry. It was high time for the new colonel to be off to action. St. Louis was in a turmoil: the Southern sympathizers in Camp Jackson, in Lindell's Grove—the "state camp of instruction" before mentioned—were captured by United States troops; there had been firing on the crowd of spectators, and some fatalities.

Sherman, like Richard, was himself again. Once more in the regular army, he sniffed the battle from afar like a young warhorse; he was ready for the fray, slavery or no slavery, politicians or no politicians. Whatever his opinions as to past issues might be, and however much he might have hoped for compromise, he was eager to fight for the continuance of the republic. The sentiment in the North was now crystallizing in favor of compelling the slave states to stay within the national union whether they would or not. The bombardment of Sumter by Beauregard had given a fatal blow to the old theory of allowing the "erring sisters" to depart in peace. They must be brought once again under the paternal roof-tree, even if it were necessary to apply the lash.

Sherman resigned his presidency of the Fifth Street Railway, instructed Mrs. Sherman to pack up and take her family to Lancaster, and hurried on himself to Washington, where he reported in person to General Scott. He there found "that the government was trying to rise to a level with the occasion." He thought that Lincoln's plan to raise ten new regiments of regulars (one of which was the Thirteenth Infantry) and his call for 75,000 volunteers, was totally "inadequate," but he remarks, "Still, it was none of my business." Instead of being allowed to recruit his new regiment, the colonel was detailed by Scott to remain in Washington for inspection duty (June 20th).

At that time Winfield Scott, as the lieutenant-general of the army, was looked upon as the elderly but efficient Moses who was to lead the children of America out of the dangerous wilds of war into an epoch of peace and reunion. No one knew exactly how this was to be accomplished, for the officials in Washington were all more or less at sea, or at cross purposes as to methods, and only the Confederates seemed inspired with real confidence and enthusiasm. Regulars and militia were gathering in and about Washington, with General Mansfield commanding in the city, and Irwin McDowell in charge on the other side of the Potomac, with headquarters at Arlington. The militia was evidently composed of the right material, but it was pretty raw material thus far. "Their uniforms," as Sherman noticed, "were as

various as the states and cities from which they came; their arms were also of every pattern and calibre; and they were so loaded down with overcoats, haversacks, knapsacks, tents and baggage, that it took from twenty-five to fifty wagons to move the camp of a regiment from one place to another, and some of the camps had bakeries and cooking establishments that would have done credit to Delmonico."

In Pennsylvania another force under General Robert Patterson had been collected and moved forward to Williamsport, Maryland, on the Potomac River. Colonel Sherman paid a visit to this army, where he talked with his old classmate, General George H. Thomas and other officers, who were of the opinion that the war would be short and decisive. And all the time the public was calling for speed in ending the conflict and giving vent to the cry—"On to Richmond!"[1]

"While I was on duty with General Scott," says Sherman, "he frequently communicated to those about him his opinions and proposed plans. He seemed vexed with the clamor of the press for immediate action, and the continued interference in details by the President, Secretary of War and Congress. He spoke of organizing a grand army of invasion, of which the regulars were to constitute the 'iron column,' and seemed to intimate that he

[1] Richmond, Virginia, had now been made the capital of the Confederacy, and became, of course, the objective point of the principal military operations of the Union armies in the east.

himself would take the field in person, although he was at the time very old, very heavy, and very unwieldy."

The public at this time was impressed with the idea that one great blow against the Confederate stronghold of Richmond would end the war. Scott could not resist the pressure, and none the less so because the Confederates now had two armies in front of Washington: one at Manassas Junction, commanded by Beauregard, with its advance guard at Fairfax Court House; and the other, under command of General Joseph E. Johnston, at Winchester. The lieutenant-general gave orders for a general advance against the enemy by the middle of July. General McDowell was to move from Washington and Patterson from Martinsburg. Colonel David Hunter was assigned to command the Second Division of McDowell's forces, and Sherman was ordered to take charge of Hunter's old brigade, consisting of five regiments, and forming part of the First Division, under General Daniel Tyler.

In the meantime Congress assembled in special session (July 4th, 1861), and Lincoln sent it a lengthy message wherein he recommended that the means be given to make the approaching contest "short and decisive." That is to say, he called for at least 400,000 men and an appropriation of four hundred millions of dollars. "And having thus chosen our course, without guile and with pure purpose," he concluded, "let us renew

our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts." Mr. Lincoln was beginning, after his slow but steady way, to feel his path and measure up to the situation, even if he did look for a "short and decisive" contest.

Sherman selected for his brigade in the field the Thirteenth New York Regiment, the Sixty-ninth New York, the Seventy-ninth New York, and the Second Wisconsin. A battery of regular artillery was also attached to the brigade. The other regiment, the Twenty-ninth New York, was left behind to take charge of defenses and camps. The Sixty-ninth was an Irish regiment and immediately asserted the Celtic prerogative of "making trouble." The men had volunteered in New York early in April, for ninety days, but as they had come via Annapolis, owing to the disturbances in Baltimore, and had done guard duty on the railroad for several weeks before they reached Washington, it was about a month after their enrollment that they were mustered into the service. Some of the men asserted that they were entitled to their discharge in ninety days from the time of enrollment, instead of in ninety days from the time of the muster-in. Sherman submitted the question to the War Department, which promptly decided that the regiment would be held till the expiration of three months from the date of muster-in; *i. e.*, until about the first of August. This supposedly settled the controversy. Corcoran, the colonel of the Sixty-ninth, and his officers generally, desired to go to

war, Sherman tells us, but a good many of the men were not so anxious. There were not a few recruits at that time who enlisted for what they thought was to be a dress parade, and who were quite ready to go home when they found that war meant something more than the waving of flags and the strident music of brass bands.

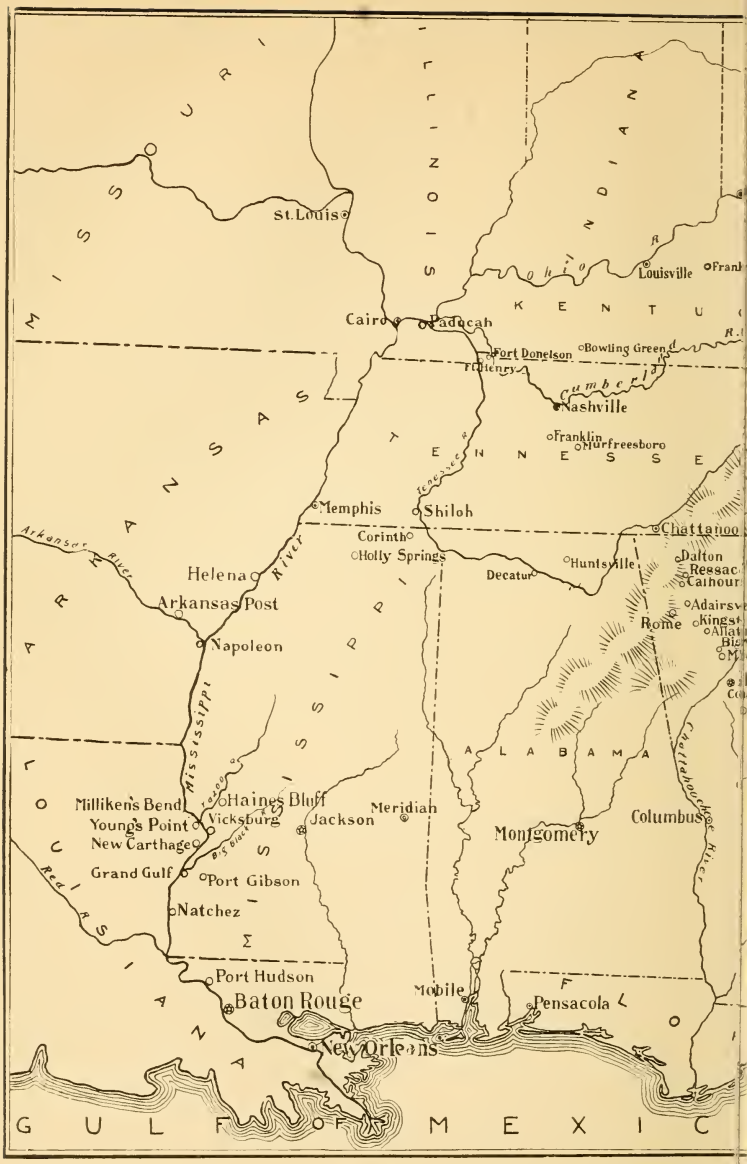
Sherman was now in his element, and worked day and night to prepare his raw troops for the advance. There was surely enough work for every commander in trying to bring order out of the general chaos and confusion. The government of the United States was finding it a great task to handle or direct the forces which a loyal North was now sending in for its defense. One felt in those early days of the conflict that we were merely playing with war. Uniforms were more in evidence around Washington than discipline ; there was more talk and bluster than action ; and everything that was done, or about to be done, was rushed into print forthwith, so that the Confederates were able to keep thoroughly informed, in conjunction with the aid of their many friends in the capital, anent the plans for their subjugation. But the public, "drunk with hope," saw none of these things, or "saw them double ; and those who might have led the people ran after them."

It might be said, in defense of the delusions of the hour (exactly as Colonel S. M. Bowman pointed out) that the Union army was numerically stronger than the Confederate forces, as well officered, better equipped, and as well instructed. But the Confed-

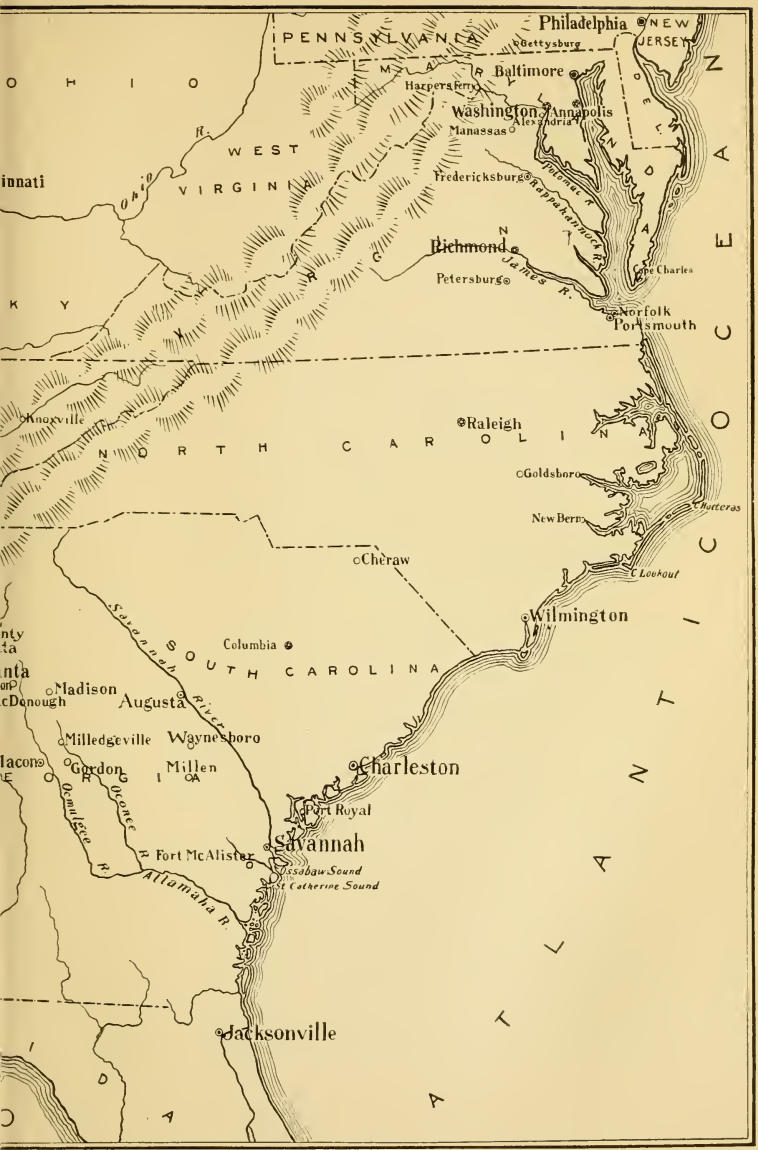
erates had the advantage of being on the defensive. On the other hand, "our troops would have to move to find the enemy, and to attack him in his chosen position, or sustain his fire delivered from behind cover or from behind earthworks. But the salient point of this question is, that the result of any movement, by either side, was left to chance; no man could have indicated the causes which would determine the result. It was purely chance whether any movement ordered from headquarters would be made at all; a rare chance whether it would be made at the time designated in orders; a miraculous chance if it were made exactly as ordered. By waiting a very little while, the result might have been reasonably assured. We could not wait. In the American character Hope crowds Patience to the wall." [1]

General McDowell began his advance on the 16th of July, with a force estimated at some 28,000 men. From this movement resulted the battle of Bull Run, about thirty miles southwest from Washington, where Beauregard and Johnston (the latter had eluded General Patterson) won their first victory, and caused unpleasant surprise to certain worthy persons in the North who had firmly believed that those "cowardly rebels" would never look a Union army in the face. Sherman, who there received his real baptism of fire, tells us,

[1] Bowman and Irwin, "Sherman and His Campaigns." It must not be forgotten, too, that the public pressure was increased by the cries of some enterprising newspaper editors, each of whom had a certain plan for ending the war.




THE SCENE OF SHERMAN


PENNSYLVANIA
Philadelphia
NEW JERSEY
Gettysburg
Baltimore
Harpers Ferry
Washington
Annapolis
Alexandria
Manassas
WEST VIRGINIA
Fredericksburg
Potomac R.
Rappahannock R.
Richmond
James R.
Petersburg
Cape Charles
Norfolk
Portsmouth
Knoxville
Raleigh
NORTH CAROLINA
Goldsboro
Hatteras
New Bern
Cheraw
Cape Lookout
Wilmington
Savannah River
Columbia
SOUTH CAROLINA
Madison
Augusta
Milledgeville
Waynesboro
Gordon
Millen
Charleston
Ocmulgee R.
Ogeechee R.
Port Royal
Fort McAlister
Savannah
Ossabaw Sound
St Catherine Sound
Altamaha R.
Jacksonville
ATLANTIC OCEAN

some years later, that this was one of the best-planned battles of the Civil War, but one of the worst-fought. The men were not yet nerved up to the frightful sights and sounds of war; it was too much like bringing a lot of kindergartners, willing but inexperienced, into the fray. "We had good organization, good men, but no cohesion, no real discipline, no respect for authority, no real knowledge of war. Both armies were fairly defeated and, whichever had stood fast, the other would have run. Though the North was overwhelmed with mortification and shame, the South really had not much to boast of, for in the three or four hours of fighting their organization was so broken up that they did not and could not follow our army when it was known to be in a state of disgraceful and causeless flight."

It may be true, theoretically, that "both armies were fairly defeated," but the fact remains that for all practical purposes the Confederates were the victors, and that the moral effect of the battle was prodigious. The South was naturally jubilant at the result, and doubtless became over-confident; the North was shocked, shamed, dazed—and was taught a useful lesson. Henceforth there would be no vaporings about "cowardly rebels."

As commander of his brigade, Sherman behaved throughout his first battle with a fine combination of gallantry and discretion, doing all that he personally could, however useless, to stem the tide of flight. He seems to have handled his brigade in a

masterly manner, as he put his regiments successively into action; but at last his forces, after valiant advances against a storm of shot and shell, went to pieces. This was about half-past three o'clock in the afternoon. Up to that time all had kept their places, and seemed perfectly cool, but the exposure to an intense fire of small arms, at short range, finally produced disorder. "Men fell away from their ranks, talking and in great confusion," officially reported Sherman. Many of his officers were supposed to be dead or missing, and many wounded were being assisted to the rear. "We succeeded in partially reforming the regiments, but it was manifest that they would not stand, and I directed Colonel Corcoran [of the Sixty-ninth New York] to move along the ridge to the rear, near the position where we had first formed the brigade. General McDowell was there in person, and used all possible efforts to reassure the men. By the active exertions of Colonel Corcoran we formed an irregular square against the cavalry which were then seen to issue from the position from which we had been driven, and we began our retreat toward the same ford of Bull Run by which we had approached the field of battle." On reaching Centreville Sherman found McDowell, who then hoped to rally the army and make a final stand. "But about nine o'clock at night I received from General Tyler, in person, the order to continue the retreat to the Potomac. This retreat was by night, and disorderly in the extreme. The men of different regiments mingled to-

gether, and some reached the river at Arlington, some at Long Bridge, and the greater part returned to their former camp, at or near Fort Corcoran. I reached this point at noon the next day, and found a miscellaneous crowd crossing over the aqueduct and ferries. Conceiving this to be demoralizing I at once commanded the guard to be increased, and all persons attempting to pass over to be stopped. . . . Comparative order was restored, and all were posted to the best advantage."

It was gloomy and drizzling when Sherman reached Fort Corcoran, but the day was no gloomier than the military outlook. Every one seemed to be demoralized; the nation, or the northern part of it, had gone into sudden mourning. But there was a quick reaction, as the people girded their loins anew for better results. It was now understood, as General Force truly says, that "men who would carry on war must learn the business of war, as a man must learn any business if he would succeed in it."

Sherman worked hard to bring his brigade into form, and with good results. The Sixty-ninth (Irish) Regiment, however, was rather tired of the war; some of the men were very anxious to see their homes again. One morning after reveille one of its officers remarked nonchalantly to Sherman: "Colonel, I'm going to New York to-day; what can I do for you?"

"How can you go to New York?" demanded Sherman. "I don't remember to have signed a leave for you!"

The officer explained that he did not need a leave of absence. He had engaged to serve his country for three months only, he said, and had already exceeded that time. He was a lawyer; he had neglected his business long enough, and proposed to go home. Some of the soldiers of his regiment listened eagerly as he spoke. Sherman saw that now was the time for discipline, very much needed. So he replied sharply: "Captain, this question of your term of service has been submitted to the rightful authority, and the decision has been published in orders. You're a soldier, and must submit to orders until you are properly discharged. If you attempt to leave without orders it will be mutiny, and I will shoot you like a dog! Go back into the fort *now*, instantly, and don't dare to leave without my consent!"

Sherman had on his overcoat, and may, as he naïvely admits, "have had his hand about the breast." Be that as it may, the captain, after a brief pause, walked back sullenly into the fort.

This incident had a sequel that proved characteristic of the peculiar humor and shrewdness of Abraham Lincoln. The very same day Colonel Sherman (he was still a colonel in the regular service although commanding a brigade of volunteers) met the President and Mr. Seward, driving in an open hack toward Fort Corcoran. He eagerly inquired if they were on their way to his camps. "Yes," replied Lincoln; "we heard that you had got over the big scare, and we thought we would come over

and see the boys." By invitation of the President, Sherman jumped into the hack, and the party was driven into camp. On their way Lincoln hinted that he would like to speak to the soldiers of the brigade, to cheer them up and inspire them with confidence. Whereupon Sherman, with good, hard, unemotional sense, suggested that Lincoln should discourage all cheering or hysterical noise of any kind. "We had enough of that before Bull Run to ruin any set of men," he explained in effect, "and what we need now are cool, thoughtful, hard-fighting soldiers—no more hurrahing; no more humbug."

Lincoln took the advice in the best of heart, and was evidently pleased at the practical qualities of the colonel. In fine, they got along much better than at their meeting in the White House, when the President had announced his intention "to keep house."[1] When he reached the first camp of the brigade, Lincoln made an admirable address to the men, full of hope, and well seasoned, no doubt, with those moral platitudes which he knew so well how to deliver as if they were not platitudes. Once, when the men began to cheer, he promptly checked them with the quizzical warning: "Don't

[1] Sherman was one of the very few generals who seldom grieved Lincoln. . . . He had learned to cherish the most profound respect for Lincoln. . . . There is no doubt that Lincoln's earliest impressions of Sherman were quite as unfavorable to Sherman as were Sherman's early impressions of Lincoln.—Alexander K. McClure, in "Lincoln and Men of War Times."

cheer, boys. I confess I rather like it myself, but Colonel Sherman here says it's not military, and I guess we had better defer to his opinion."

Thus they passed through all the camps of the brigade, the cleanliness of which drew forth many compliments from Mr. Lincoln, who admitted that this was the first bright moment he had experienced since he had heard the mortifying news from Bull Run. At length, when they reached the men of the Sixty-ninth Regiment, the mutinous captain forced his way through the crowd to Lincoln's carriage (wherein was Sherman, on the front seat) and said:

"Mr. President, I have a cause of grievance. This morning I went to speak to Colonel Sherman, and he threatened to shoot me!"

"He threatened to shoot you, did you say?" echoed Mr. Lincoln, who was standing up in the hack, facing the soldiers. He had told all the men not to hesitate to appeal to him personally in case they felt themselves aggrieved. Here was the captain's opportunity.

"Yes, sir, Colonel Sherman threatened to shoot me," he reiterated.

The President stooped his gaunt form toward the officer, as he said, in a loud stage whisper: "Well, if I were you, and he threatened to shoot, I would not trust him, for I believe he would do it."

The soldiers laughed, and the captain, unable to stand the ridicule, disappeared from the crowd, as he does from history.

After the carriage had been driven on, and Sher-

man had explained the nature of the grievance, Lincoln said: "Of course I didn't know anything about it, but I thought you knew your own business best."

Lincoln's answer to the captain had an immediate effect in restoring order. The mere narration of this episode serves to show more clearly than a hundred chapters, how much the raw army stood in need of discipline in those early days of the struggle, when soldiers were too prone to think that, as members of a great democracy, they were "as good as," if not better than, their superior officers.

But now that illusions were over—now that others saw, as did Sherman, that "hurrahing" and "spread-eagleism" should be replaced by solid, hard work on the part of both soldiers and government,—things underwent a marvelous change. George Brinton McClellan, who had made a reputation for himself in western Virginia, was summoned to Washington, and organized the Army of the Potomac in masterly fashion. In organization was his strength; only as an aggressor was he lacking. Troops began to pour in from all quarters; the papers were full of the wonderful executive ability of the "young Napoleon."

In the meantime Sherman was appointed a brigadier-general of volunteers (August, 1861), and ordered to the new Department of the Cumberland, embracing Kentucky, Tennessee, etc., as second in command to Brigadier-General Robert Anderson.

Sherman was glad of the assignment, and none the less so because he did not wish to be placed at the head of an army. He was more modest than some of the commanders. When he mentioned to Lincoln his desire to serve under another general, the President said "yes" with alacrity. His chief trouble, observed Lincoln with a twinkle in his inscrutable eyes, was to find places for "the too many generals who wanted to be at the head of affairs."

The new brigadier-general soon found that his responsibilities were greater than he had expected. Hardly had he reached Kentucky, to confront the peculiar military and political situation in that state —he found "the young men were generally inclined to the cause of the South," while the older men of property desired to be neutral—than General Anderson relinquished his command, owing to broken health (October 8th). "I must go away, or it will kill me," said Anderson, pathetically. General Sherman himself was now forced to assume the leadership. He found the position a thankless one. Indeed, he was soon to be heralded throughout the North as a mad man—simply because he had more sanity than some of the civil authorities in Washington. He would be classed in many of the newspapers as mentally unbalanced ; more than one official would consider him a mental and physical wreck ; the Assistant Secretary of War, Colonel Thomas A. Scott, would say to Colonel McClure, "Sherman's gone in the head !" Truth is not always welcome ; the teller of it is occasionally doomed to martyrdom.

## CHAPTER IV

### AT WAR IN EARNEST

THE situation in Kentucky was a peculiarly trying one, from a military standpoint, owing to the mixed political conditions which hemmed in the commander of the Department of the Cumberland. Sherman was glad to hear that Brigadier-General Buell would soon arrive from California to relieve him. While he was waiting, trying as best he could to cope with impossibilities, Secretary of War Cameron, who had in his train several war correspondents, honored him with a visit at Louisville. On inquiring as to the condition of affairs in the Department, Cameron was surprised at Sherman's answer that they were "as bad as bad could be." Later, when the party were at the Galt House, the secretary said: "Now, General Sherman, tell us of your troubles."

The general looked suspiciously at the correspondents. "They are all friends," explained Cameron; "you may speak freely." Thereupon Sherman poured forth his woes, complaining, among other things, of the insufficient number of troops allowed him, and the scarcity of arms. He believed that there was throughout the state a large number of Union men of the more substantial kind,

who, overawed by the Confederates and beyond the reach of the Federal forces, were therefore obliged to remain neutral. At his lowest computation there were then 35,000 organized insurgent soldiers in Kentucky, who contemplated a grand advance toward the Ohio River. To expel the enemy from the state, he went on, he needed at least 60,000 men, instead of the much smaller number—say, 15,000 to 18,000—allotted to him. Sherman added that to carry the whole war to the Gulf of Mexico, and crush all opposition to the Union in the entire Mississippi Valley, at least 200,000 troops would be requisite for the use of the government.

Simon Cameron asked, not without irritation: "Where do you suppose, General Sherman, all this force is to come from?" [1]

Sherman replied that he did not know; that it was not his duty to raise and place the necessary military force in the field; that such a duty appertained to the War Department. There is a tradition, characteristic enough if true, that he also bluntly said to the secretary: "You can at least stop playing politics, and let the young men who want to come forward and enlist, keep coming. Instead of that the politicians at Washington are discouraging them, and trying to make the country believe that this war is going to blow over in a little while!"

Cameron promised to do what he could to relieve

[1] See the report of the interview, written August 24, 1866, by General Thomas J. Wood, who was present.

Sherman's embarrassment, but it is evident that he, like many others, failed to realize the gravity of the general situation. And now Sherman, who had underestimated rather than exaggerated that situation, was to be rewarded for his candor by being declared "insane"—a "visionary lunatic"—a "military imbecile." The interview at the Galt House became public property, and the newspapers, or some of them at least, were soon jeering at the general. It was said that he had asked for 200,000 men for service in Kentucky; that he was suffering from nervous fear and took a frightened view of things; that he had made the most absurd demands upon the secretary of war. And the secretary, so said Dame Rumor, looked upon Sherman as an officer whose mind had become unbalanced through great responsibilities and poor health. So the story went, increasing in sensationalism as it progressed, while it proved a toothsome morsel for the kind public, which is not averse, usually, to reading disagreeable things—of others.

About the middle of November Sherman was relieved of his command by Buell, as he had expected, and was transferred for duty to the Department of the Missouri. A few days later he was sent to Sedalia, to inspect the camp there. After he had concluded his work and given certain instructions as to the disposition of troops, he was ordered back to St. Louis, where he made his report to Major-General Halleck, then commanding the Department of the Missouri.

The public interpreted the arrival of Buell, and Sherman's recall from Sedalia, as a sign that the latter had lost the confidence of the authorities, and was looked upon as "dangerous." The clamor against him was kept up with such vigor that he went home to Lancaster on a twenty days' leave of absence, that time might be allowed for the storm to blow over.

One can imagine the feelings of Sherman when, early in December, during his Lancaster furlough, he read the following editorial in the Cincinnati *Commercial:*

"The painful intelligence reaches us in such form that we are not at liberty to discredit it, that General W. T. Sherman, late commander of the Department of the Cumberland, is insane! It appears that he was at times, when commanding in Kentucky, stark mad. We learn that he at one time telegraphed to the War Department three times in one day for permission to evacuate Kentucky and retreat into Indiana. He also, on several occasions, frightened the leading Union men of Louisville almost out of their wits by the most astounding representations of the overwhelming force of Buckner, and the assertion that Louisville could not be defended."

It should be remembered that General Buckner (who was destined, as a sign of national reunion, to be one of the pallbearers at General Grant's funeral) had been making things very unpleasant for Kentucky "loyalists."

The editorial continued: "When relieved from the command in Kentucky he [Sherman] was sent to Missouri, and placed at the head of a brigade at Sedalia, where the shocking fact that he was a mad man was developed by orders that his subordinates knew to be preposterous and refused to obey. He has, of course, been relieved altogether from command. The harsh criticisms which have been lavished upon this gentleman, provoked by his strange conduct, will now give way to feelings of the deepest sympathy for him in his great calamity. It seems providential that the country has not to mourn the loss of an army through the loss of the mind of a general into whose hands were committed the vast responsibilities of the command in Kentucky."

Sherman threw down the paper in disgust. "Well, now, I shouldn't be surprised if they would fasten that on me," he cried. "It's the hardest thing in the world for a man to prove himself sane, especially when many people think his ideas wild!" He at once wrote a letter to General Halleck wherein he complained of the *Commercial's* attack, and explained that he had imprisoned a reporter of this very paper in Louisville for visiting certain camps without his leave, and, indeed, against the general's positive orders. "These newspapers have us in their power," he added, "and can destroy us as they please, and this one can destroy my usefulness by depriving me of the confidence of officers and men."

It may be noted, in passing, that this experience with the *Commercial* did not tend to make Sherman any more cordial toward war correspondents—a class of men, for whom, with some exceptions, he manifested a mixture of hatred and contempt. He believed that in their zeal for their respective journals, they were too ready to give to the public military information which proved useful news for the enemy. There is no doubt that war requires the most rigorous sort of telegraphic and postal censorship, no matter what truthful platitudes may be uttered as to the "freedom of the press."

Halleck did what he could to soothe the wounded feelings of Sherman and his relatives; but there is no doubt that for a time he had lost confidence in the judgment of his angry subordinate. For he had written to General McClellan just before the publication of the article in the *Commercial*, that General Sherman's movement of troops around Sedalia (where he was authorized to assume command in case of possible danger of attack) had not been satisfactory. "I am satisfied," Halleck went on, "that General Sherman's physical and mental system is so completely broken by labor and care as to render him for the present entirely unfit for duty. Perhaps a few weeks' rest may restore him. I am satisfied that in his present condition it would be dangerous to give him a command here."

It is certain that Sherman, for a time, was looked upon askance by the military Solons and by the foolish optimists at Washington. His nervousness

of manner, which may then have amounted to irascibility, probably increased the impression that he was suffering from hallucination due to overwork. A physician of to-day would have advised a hospital and the "rest cure." Time, however, avenged him nobly. At no distant day Sherman would live down these calumnies, and by his brilliant conduct be restored to public favor. As Colonel McClure observes, he was the only military man of that particular period of the war who thoroughly and accurately appreciated the situation in the southwest, and his estimate of the requisite forces was proved to be substantially correct. "Buell, who succeeded Sherman in command, had nearly 60,000 men when he was ordered to Grant at Shiloh, and fully 200,000 men were reapers in the harvest of death before the rebellion was conquered in the southwest and the Father of Waters again went 'unvexed to the sea.'"

On returning from his leave of absence Sherman found that Halleck was beginning to move his troops. One part, under General Grant, was ordered up the Tennessee River; another part, under Curtis, in the direction of Springfield, Missouri. Sherman was now assigned to Curtis's place in command of the camp of instruction at Benton Barracks, back of North St. Louis (December 23d). To understand his future movements we must see what was happening in the west.

In January, 1862, the Union armies everywhere numbered over 600,000 men, backed by a fleet, at various points, of more than 200 vessels. McClellan had been resting all winter on the Potomac, organizing his great army. In his front was General Joseph E. Johnston, disciplining his own soldiers and preparing for the spring campaigns. In the west affairs were being conducted on a more active scale. General Halleck had a command of supreme importance, which embraced two distinct fields of military operations, extending from the line of the Cumberland River westward toward Kansas, and divided by the Mississippi River. Of these the most important was that east of the Mississippi. The Confederates held Columbus, on that river; Fort Henry, on the Tennessee; Fort Donelson, on the Cumberland; and Bowling Green, in the Department of the Cumberland—positions which gave the key-note to the control of western and central Kentucky. It was Halleck's duty to penetrate the Confederate line of defense. This was to be done by breaking its centre, or, in other words, by a movement up the Tennessee River. This movement resulted in General Grant's capture of Fort Henry (February 6, 1862).[1]

Just a week later Sherman was ordered to Paducah, Kentucky, to look after the work of forwarding supplies and men to General Grant. The latter marched across to Fort Donelson, on the Cumber-

[1] See Dodge's "Bird's Eye View of Our Civil War," and Bowman and Irwin's "Sherman and His Campaigns."

land, a distance of ten miles, and with the assistance of the naval flotilla, captured its garrison of 12,000 men under Buckner (February 16th). It was here that Grant sent his celebrated message to Buckner, "I propose to move immediately upon your works." The North now resounded with the name of Ulysses S. Grant. Poor Sherman, faithfully attending to routine work, was lost to sight in the rush of events. The newspapers even forgot to serve up the usual breakfast fare for their readers; the legend, "Sherman is insane"—or "Sherman's health is hopelessly broken"—disappeared from print. It looked, for the matter of that, as if our general would go through the war in a subordinate capacity, with mild honor but *sans* fame. Some men might have resigned from the army in disgust. But Sherman was like Benjamin Franklin, who once said that he was not possessed of the virtue of resignation.

It was in the bitterly contested battle of Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing (April 6th and 7th) that he emerged from the cloud of public censure, and showed the fine material that was in him. From that moment he began to see life in more roseate lights.

The two brilliant victories of Grant at Forts Henry and Donelson, had ruined, as they were intended to do, the centre of the Confederate line; General Albert Sidney Johnston, who was in supreme command of the enemy here, and who was looked upon as the fondest hope of the South on the military

field, was obliged to retire to a new line along the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Having successively evacuated Columbus and Nashville, and practically abandoned Kentucky, he determined to concentrate his army around Corinth, Miss., a distance of twenty miles from the now historic Pittsburg Landing.

Grant proposed to ascend the Tennessee River, and try to break this new line along the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, of which Corinth, of course, formed the centre. He took his army to Pittsburg Landing, on the Tennessee River, and by orders from Halleck, Buell, with 37,000 men, was dispatched from Nashville, to re-enforce him. Halleck was now (March 11th) made commander of the Department of the Mississippi, embracing all the troops west of a line drawn indefinitely north and south through Knoxville, Tennessee, and east of the western boundary of Missouri and Arkansas. General Mitchell was sent out with a division to seize some point of vantage on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, which had great value to the enemy; he succeeded in capturing Huntsville and occupied Bridgeport.

In the meantime Johnston advanced from Corinth, in order to fall upon Grant's army (comprising nearly 40,000 fighting men) before Buell should arrive with the re-enforcements. Johnston made his onslaught on the Union forces, as planned, and for a time victory seemed to perch on the banners of the Secessionists. The Union lines wavered; the

surprise had proved demoralizing. For a while apparently there was no hope for Grant's startled soldiers. Then comes the death of the gallant Albert Sidney Johnston. Beauregard, succeeding to the command, and thinking that Buell is still a goodly distance away, calls a halt on the battle until the following morning, when he hopes to have his troops reformed for victory. But Buell is at hand; his forces, or at least 20,000 of them, come up in time for the second day's battle. Beauregard makes a desperately heroic struggle to retain his advantage of the day before, and by skilful management he almost succeeds in turning the Union left. "But Buell's men have profited by their rigid discipline. Their ranks are adamant. They will not be denied. An order for a general advance is given. Wallace comes up on the right. Victory shifts to the stars and stripes. The exhausted Confederates are forced in confusion from the field."

The fight was one of the fiercest of the war. Beauregard reported his entire loss as 10,699; the Union losses, according to one estimate, aggregated 1,700 killed, 7,495 wounded, and 3,022 prisoners. The struggle had been so severe that for a time the victors were worn out and nerveless. "All the division, brigade and regimental commanders, were busy," says Sherman, "in collecting stragglers, regaining lost property, in burying dead men and horses, and in providing for their wounded."

How came Sherman himself into the battle, and what did he accomplish? While at work at Pa-

ducah he organized a division of his own out of the troops arriving there, as General Halleck, who now considered that his "health" was "restored," had promised the ex-"lunatic" that he might take the field to assist in the coming movements.[1] On the 10th of March Sherman embarked this new division on the Tennessee River, and, after certain manœuvring, we find him stationed just back of Pittsburg Landing. This was in accordance with the plan to attack the enemy at Corinth, when the necessary forces had arrived, and secure his surrender. Here, finally, the Army of the Tennessee, under Grant, waited patiently for the arrival of Buell, who was marching to the rescue with calm but provoking deliberation. "The importance of the crisis was apparent," says Colonel S. M. Bowman, "for Johnston would naturally seek to strike Grant before Buell's arrival, but Buell marched his troops with the same deliberation as if no other army depended upon his promptness." But, to give the other side of the picture—and there were often two sides to these stirring war landscapes—Dr. Ropes says, in his "Story of the Civil War," that as Halleck had never intimated that he had any doubt as to Grant's safety, "Buell pursued his march with primary regard to the comfort and efficiency of his soldiers. The truth is, that the object of Buell's march, as it was understood both by him and by Halleck, was,—to use Buell's own

[1] See the letter which Halleck wrote Thomas Ewing on February 15, 1862, in regard to Sherman's condition.

words, which are very just,—'not to succor General Grant's army, but to form a junction with it for an ulterior offensive campaign.'"

Be that as it may—and the battle of Shiloh will ever cause controversy—Albert Sidney Johnston made his descent before the arrival of the reenforcements. "On Sunday morning, the 6th, early," reports Sherman, "there was a good deal of picket-firing, and I got breakfast, rode out along my lines, and, about four hundred yards to the front of Appler's regiment (Fifty-third Ohio), received from some bushes in a ravine to the left front a volley which killed my orderly, Holliday. About the same time I saw the rebel lines of battle in front coming down on us as far as the eye could reach. All my troops were in line of battle, ready, and the ground was favorable to us. I gave the necessary orders to the battery (Waterhouse's) attached to Hildebrand's brigade, and cautioned the men to reserve their fire till the rebels had crossed the ravine of Owl Creek, and had begun the ascent; also, sent staff officers to notify Generals McClernand and Prentiss of the coming blow. Indeed, McClernand had already sent three regiments to the support of my left flank, and they were in position when the onset came. In a few minutes the battle of Shiloh began with extreme fury and lasted two days."

The battle took its name from Shiloh Church, near Pittsburg Landing. Pittsburg itself was a mere steamboat landing, situated in a deep ravine,

down which the Corinth road led to the Tennessee River. The ground in front of the Landing was an undulating table-land, a hundred feet above the road-bottom, lying between Lick Creek and Snake Creek, two little tributaries of the Tennessee; Owl Creek, rising near the source of Lick Creek and flowing in a northeasterly direction, emptied into Snake Creek. The Confederates had formed under cover of the brush lining Owl Creek bottom; after opening fire from their artillery, they were soon moving forward the infantry across the open ground and up a slope which separated them from the lines of the Union Army.[1]

Sherman saw that the enemy designed to pass his left flank, and fall upon Generals McClernand and Prentiss, whose camps were two miles back from the Tennessee River. Very soon the sharp, crackling sound of musketry and the booming of artillery announced that Prentiss was engaged, and later Sherman inferred that he was falling back. Regiments now began to break in disorder; the enemy pressed on madly; it looked, for a time, as if Shiloh was to end in a Union panic. Through all the danger of the day, through all the fierce noise and confusion, Sherman retained his coolness, inspiring all around him, and giving the lie, then and there, to the critics who had called him a faint-hearted fool. After ten o'clock the Confederates made a furious attack on General McClernand's front. "Finding him pressed," writes Sherman, in his

[1] "Sherman and His Campaigns."

official report, "I moved McDowell's brigade directly against the left flank of the enemy, forced him back some distance, and then directed the men to avail themselves of every cover—trees, fallen timber, and a wooded valley to our right. We held this position for four long hours, sometimes gaining and at others losing ground; General McClernand and myself acting in perfect concert, and struggling to maintain this line." It was a terrific ordeal, through which these two generals remained as self-possessed as if they were playing a quiet game of chess. Later they selected a new line of defense, with its right covering a bridge over Snake Creek, by which General Lew Wallace was expected to approach with re-enforcements. As they fell back to this position the enemy's cavalry charged them, but was finely repulsed by an Illinois regiment. Later, McClernand's division made a dashing charge against the enemy, "and drove him back into the ravines to our front and right," reports Sherman. "I had a clear field, about two hundred yards wide, in my immediate front, and contented myself with keeping the enemy's infantry at that distance during the rest of the day."

There is no need to give in detail the story of Sherman's great service to the Union on that or the succeeding day at Shiloh. Throughout the whole action he displayed surprising judgment and skill in the management of his men, and although severely wounded in the left hand on the first day, and again wounded on the second day, besides having three

horses shot from under him, he was never absent from his post. Considering how new he was to real warfare it may be truthfully said that he proved a marvel in the way he rallied faltering troops, inspired the braver men, and coolly issued his orders amid the storm of iron. Grant, between whom and Sherman there would always exist the firmest friendship, afterward said of him: "At the battle of Shiloh, on the first day, he held, with raw troops, the key-point of the landing. It is no disparagement to any other officer to say that I do not believe there was another division commander on the field who had the skill and experience to have done it. To his individual efforts I am indebted for the success of that battle." General Halleck announced that Sherman, according to unanimous opinion, "saved the fortunes of the day," on April the 6th, and "contributed largely to the glorious victory" of the second day's battle. As a result he was promoted to a major-generalcy of volunteers (May 1, 1862).

Sherman was fortunate in emerging so brilliantly from an action which was very harshly criticised in certain quarters. For it was maintained by some that the army at Pittsburg Landing had been not merely surprised, but surprised in the most disgraceful way; and there were all sorts of wild rumors afloat, including one that General Grant had been drunk at the beginning of the battle. Sherman says, as to the last assertion: "Personally I saw General Grant, who with his staff visited me

about 10 A. M., of the 6th, when we were desperately engaged." As to the "disgracefulness" of the surprise we find Sherman writing to his brother, the senator, in his graphic, vehement way :

"The scoundrels who fled their ranks and left about half their number to do their work have succeeded in establishing their story of surprise, stuck with bayonets and swords in their tents, and all that stuff. They were surprised, astonished and disgusted at the utter want of respect for life on the part of the Confederates, whom they have been taught to regard as inferior to them, and were surprised to see them approach with banners fluttering, bayonets glistening, and lines dressed on the centre. It was a beautiful and dreadful sight, and I was prepared for and have freely overlooked the fact that many wilted and fled, but, gradually recovering, rejoined our ranks. But those who did not recover their astonishment had to cast about for a legitimate excuse; and the cheapest one was to accuse their officers, and strange to say, this story is believed before ours, who fought two whole days.

"In this instance the scamps will soon learn their mistake. Those who ran and cried 'surprise,' 'cut up,' etc., expected all who stood to their work to be killed, but all were not killed, and enough remain as witnesses, after the public are satisfied with the horrid stories of men butchered, etc. . . . For two days they hung about the river bank, filling the ears of newspaper reporters with their tales of horrid surprise."

This is not a very gratifying description, but it is evidently a true one, and shows us, better than a dozen histories, that war is not all heroism, waving of flags and valor. It incidentally gives us another instance of why Sherman disliked newspaper correspondents, who did so much, in this case, to impress the public with the mistakes of Shiloh. One thing at least is certain : The battle will be the subject of spirited discussion so long as war historians and the inevitable "military experts" shall endure.

After the fight Beauregard returned to Corinth, unpursued by Grant, whose critics asserted that he should have used his tired men to chase the enemy. Halleck now arrived on the scene to take personal command of the armies under Grant, Buell and Pope. The last-named general was diverted from his success along the Mississippi River, and brought over to assist in besieging Corinth. Halleck evidently shared the prejudices rampant just then against Grant, for in reorganizing the forces (wherein Sherman was assigned to an important division) he gave Grant the nominal position of "second in command." This assignment left him without any well-defined duties, and he naturally looked upon it as little less than a polished insult. And now it is that we see Sherman saving this great officer for future services to his government.

During a visit to Halleck's headquarters Sherman was informed that Grant had applied for, and re-

ceived, a thirty-days' leave of absence, and proposed going away the next morning. Sherman knew that this probably meant a permanent withdrawal from the army, for he realized how Grant was chafing under the slight which had been put upon him by Halleck. So, with the best intentions that man ever had, he galloped off to the camp of the discredited general.

As he rode up, he found Major Rawlins and other members of Grant's staff surrounded by chests and articles which indicated a sort of military moving day. Sherman inquired for "the general," and was shown to his tent. Here he found Grant assorting letters and papers, and tying them up with red tape into little bundles. The visitor asked Grant if it were true that he was going away.

"Yes," was the laconic answer.

"What is the reason?" demanded Sherman.

Grant replied—and we can fancy him taking the ever-present cigar from his mouth: "Sherman, *you* know. *You* know I am in the way here! I have stood it as long as I can, and I can endure it no longer."

"Where are you going to?"

"To St. Louis."

"Have you any business there?"

"Not a bit!"

Sherman, who had, as he confessed, received new life from the battle of Shiloh, and no longer fretted over the old allegations as to his "craziness," was

now intent on bearing patiently the "slings and arrows" of misfortune. He argued that if Grant retired, events would go "right along," and he would be forgotten; whereas, if he remained in the army "some happy accident might restore him to favor and his true place." Grant took this advice in a friendly spirit, and promised to do nothing rash. Shortly thereafter he wrote Sherman that he had decided to remain with the army. In answering this note General Sherman said: "I . . . am rejoiced at your conclusion to remain; for you could not be quiet at home for a week when armies were moving, and rest could not relieve your mind of the gnawing sensation that injustice had been done you."

Thus it appears that in his interview Sherman wrought better than he then knew. Nothing speaks more eloquently in his behalf than this episode. Some generals, more jealous than he, might have been only too glad to get rid of Grant as a dangerous rival. But through all the pettiness of the war—and Heaven knows that it was full of smallness, bickerings and false pride in certain directions—there stands out, in bold and delightful relief, the steadfast trust which Grant and Sherman, the two greatest military figures of the conflict, on the Northern side, maintained in each other.

On the 30th of April the grand army under Halleck, estimated in round numbers at 120,000 men, began its movement against Corinth, where Beauregard, now re-enforced by General Van Dorn, had

fortified himself for the coming ordeal. The advance, as General Grant says, in his "Personal Memoirs," "was a siege from the start to the close." The Union troops "were always behind intrenchments, except, of course, the small reconnoitring parties sent to the front to clear the way for an advance." Indeed, the army was thoroughly entrenched all the way from the Tennessee River to Corinth. About the 28th of May General Logan told Grant that he knew the Confederates were evacuating Corinth. It was said that loaded trains had been heard leaving the place. Logan was right; the stronghold was being abandoned by the Confederates, who had manfully cheered every time an empty train reached there, in order to give the "Yankees" the impression that re-enforcements were arriving. When the Union troops marched into the town they found neither active Confederates nor stores of any kind. The trophies of war comprised a few "Quaker guns," otherwise black logs pointed in a threatening fashion toward the Northerners.

Beauregard had wisely abandoned the place as untenable. The evacuation had great strategic value for the North; the Confederates were now driven out of west Tennessee. Soon Fort Pillow was evacuated, and Memphis surrendered (June 6th) to the Union forces. The Mississippi River was open from its source to the latter point; while the Federals also held New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The possession of the Mississippi from Memphis to Baton Rouge, with Vicksburg as the

chief objective, now became a matter of the first importance. It was evident that the western armies had accomplished much more than had McClellan and the forces in the East.

During the movement to Corinth Sherman acted with a dash and good sense that increased the reputation he had made at Shiloh. There was no chance for much brilliancy under the cautious advance of Halleck, who moved as an engineer rather than as a strategist. Yet Sherman gave more than one evidence of his energy and skill; as, for instance, when his men gallantly carried two positions, one of which was two miles out from the main line of the enemy, on a commanding elevation, and defended by an entrenched battery with infantry supports. After numerous activities Sherman was ordered by Grant, who had been appointed to command the Army of the Tennessee, to repair to Memphis and put it in a state of defense. Halleck had just been made commander of all the armies of the United States, with headquarters in Washington.

When Sherman arrived with his troops in Memphis (July 21st) he found the place "dead." All churches, schools and stores were closed; the scene was one of dreariness, and the citizens, who were naturally in sympathy with the South, either kept sullenly indoors or moved about with resentful faces. It was one of those times when the conqueror did not receive the customary crown. The general caused all the closed places to be opened,

restored the old city government to its public functions, brought an air of peaceful prosperity once more into the streets, fortified his position, drilled his division, watched the military situation in western Tennessee, and sharply supervised the administration of civil affairs in the town. He acted as a shrewd soldier and a good business man, and realizing that he was in the midst of a hostile population he wisely divested himself of any shreds of sentiment. He was a man who never let the feeling which he undoubtedly possessed interfere with the stern, harsh duties of war; he became such an adept in hiding his heart by a barrier of bayonets that a good many of our Southern brethren—some of whom still live—came to regard him as a wonderfully close imitation of the Emperor Nero.

His ability as an administrator is well shown by a reference to his letter-book. His correspondence therein, which emphasizes his peculiar talents of expression, covers the widest range of subjects, from matters of supreme military importance to instructions as to the pettiest details of municipal government. At one time he addresses a long letter to Mr. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, protesting against the government's policy of allowing speculators to purchase cotton within the lines of the Confederacy. "If England ever threatens war," he says, "because we don't furnish her cotton, tell her plainly if she can't employ and feed her own people, to send them here, where they can not only earn an honest living, but soon secure independence by

moderate labor. We are not bound to furnish her cotton." [1]

Again, Sherman writes to the editor of the Memphis *Union-Appeal:* "Personalities in a newspaper are wrong and criminal. Thus, though you meant to be complimentary in your sketch of my career, you make more than a dozen mistakes of fact, which I need not correct, as I don't desire my biography to be written till I am dead. . . . Use your influence to re-establish system, order, government. You may rest easy that no military commander is going to neglect internal safety, or to guard against external danger; but to do right requires time, and more patience than I usually possess. If I find the press of Memphis actuated by high principle, and a sole devotion to their country, I will be their best friend; but, if I find them personal, abusive, dealing in innuendoes, and hints, at a blind venture, and looking to their own selfish aggrandizement and fame, then they had better look out; for I regard such persons as greater enemies to their country, and to mankind, than the men who, from a mistaken sense of State pride, have taken up muskets, and fight us about as hard as we care about."

Then we see General Sherman writing to Grant, under date of August 26th: "The newspapers are accusing me of cruelty to the sick—as base a charge as ever was made. I would not let the sanitary

[1] It was natural that in discussing this intricate cotton question General Sherman should regard it from the standpoint of the imperative military man, rather than from the more subtle view-point of the statesman.

committee carry off a boat-load of sick because I have no right to. We have good hospitals here, and plenty of them. Our regimental hospitals are in the camps of the men, and the sick do much better there than in the general hospitals. So say my division surgeon and the regimental surgeons."

In a letter to the editor of the Memphis *Bulletin* he says, in stating his willingness to follow up a reasonable complaint against the misbehavior of any of his soldiers: "In some instances where our soldiers are complained of they have been insulted by sneering remarks about 'Yankees,' 'Northern barbarians,' 'Lincoln's hirelings,' etc. People who use such language must seek redress through some one else, for I will not tolerate insults to our country or cause. . . . I will punish the soldiers for trespass or waste, if adjudged by a court-martial, because they disobey orders; but soldiers are men and citizens as well as soldiers, and should promptly resent any insult to their country, come from what quarter it may. . . . Insult to a soldier does not justify pillage, but it takes from the officer the disposition he would otherwise feel to follow up the inquiry and punish the wrong-doers."

About the same time the general is writing, in a sarcastic vein, to John Sherman that "the people are always right. Of course, in the long run, because this year they are one thing, next year another. Do you say the people were right last year, in saying, acting and believing that 30,000 [men] were enough to hold Kentucky and carry on an offensive

war against the South? 'The people' is a vague expression."

These are not very spectacular glimpses of war, perhaps, but they show the trials that beset Sherman, and the problems with which he grappled, when his way was not illumined by the glamour of a soldier on the field of battle. If they show him in some testiness of temper, it must yet be admitted that any general in the heart of a hostile people does not find life a bed of roses. If the imperturbable Lee had not been stopped at Gettysburg and had captured Philadelphia, he would doubtless have found the inhabitants of the "City of Brotherly Love" equally hard to bear with, and might have lost not a little of that philosophic calmness which suggests so closely the character of General Washington.

And in spite of his acerbity, and his hatred of the taunts of certain citizens of Memphis, Sherman could descend, or ascend, to a bit of courtesy toward the enemy that indicated the gentleman "to the manner born," rather than the uncompromising soldier. For instance, when Van Dorn, the Confederate general, had his headquarters in Holly Springs, and tried, by means of spies, to secure supplies from Memphis, Sherman prevented him from obtaining things of any importance, but "connived," as he frankly states, at the Confederate's receiving, for his own personal use, cigars, liquors, boots and gloves. This was a courtesy that the latter should have appreciated, and Sherman, who

knew the value of good whiskey and fine cigars, would doubtless have expected equal consideration under similar circumstances. But when it came to smuggling through medicines and provisions for Van Dorn's camp, the Union general was again the stern soldier.

Once one of his officers found in a barn, on a farm outside of Memphis, a handsome city hearse, gorgeously decorated with plumes. The farmer explained that "they had had a big funeral out of Memphis," but investigation proved that the coffin in the hearse contained a fine assortment of medicines for the use of Van Dorn's army.

It need hardly be chronicled that the hearse got no farther toward the enemy. Sherman observes, with a twinkle in his eye no doubt, as he wrote, that thus, "under the pretense of a first-class funeral, they had carried through our guards the very things we had tried to prevent. It was a good trick, but diminished our respect for such pageants afterward."

But events are hastening, if a trifle slowly. *Festina lente* was the motto at this stage of the game of war. Let us follow Sherman on to Vicksburg.

## CHAPTER V

### ON TO VICKSBURG

THE complete opening of the Mississippi, from source to mouth, had now become the *ultima thule* of the Union campaigns in the west. Shortly after the battle of Corinth (where the Confederates were severely repulsed, on October 3 and 4, 1862, they having recruited their strength for a struggle to retake the place), General Grant proposed to Halleck a movement having for its end the capture of Vicksburg. Vicksburg was of great importance to the enemy, in that it occupied, as Grant pointed out, the first high ground coming close to the river below Memphis. From Vicksburg, too, a railroad ran eastward, connecting with other roads leading into Southern territory; while on the opposite side of the Mississippi was a second line which ran to Shreveport, Louisiana. At this particular time Vicksburg was the only channel connecting the parts of the Confederacy divided by the river. "So long as it was held by the enemy the free navigation of the river was prevented. Hence its importance."

Early in November Grant began this new campaign from Jackson, Tennessee, by a movement on Grand Junction, on the Mississippi Central Railroad, which the Confederate general, Pemberton,

then occupied. Grant's moving force comprised about 30,000 men; he estimated that Pemberton had about the same number of effectives. McPherson commanded Grant's left wing; C. S. Hamilton had the centre; while Sherman was still at Memphis with the right wing. The movement resulted in the capture of Grand Junction and La Grange (November 8th). A few days later Grant's cavalry was in Holly Springs, and Pemberton fell back south of the Tallahatchie River. Thereupon Grant sent Sherman the following laconic despatch:

"Meet me at Columbus, Kentucky, on Thursday next. If you have a good map of the country south of you take it up with you."

When the meeting took place, Sherman was ordered to join Grant with two divisions, and, if possible, march them down the Mississippi Central Railroad. It was not long before Sherman had executed this order with a promptness that won praise from his superior, but in the meantime the plan of campaign against Vicksburg was changed. Sherman was ordered to take charge of the new expedition, with the co-operation of a gunboat flotilla under the command of Admiral Porter. Grant explained that Sherman, with a force of nearly 40,000 men, was to transport the troops by boat down the Mississippi, and try to capture Vicksburg from the rear by making a landing up the Yazoo River, which empties into the Mississippi a few miles above the city. The garrison at Vicksburg was then small; and Grant hoped so to han-

dle his troops that he might keep Pemberton away from there.

A large fleet of steamboats, protected by Admiral Porter's gunboats, was soon bearing Sherman's army down the Mississippi River, making a magnificent sight. "Some few guerrilla parties infested the banks, but did not dare to molest so strong a force."

It is plain that Sherman's heart beat high as he surveyed the fleet steaming down the river; he already saw Vicksburg within his grasp. But the best-laid plans of generals sometimes have a way of going awry, owing to the contemptuous refusal of the enemy to do the things expected of them. Pemberton managed to get into Vicksburg before Sherman arrived on the scene. And this is the way it happened. While Grant pushed forward to help in the movement the two Confederate generals, Van Dorn and Forrest, joined in an operation against his line of communications. Van Dorn captured Holly Springs (December 20th) with its valuable stores of food and munitions of war, while several important bridges in Grant's rear were destroyed about the same time. The colonel who surrendered the post was dismissed the service, but his disgrace could not change the situation. The loss of Holly Springs was a sad blow to Grant, whose base of supplies had thus been cut off. In order to re-establish his base he was obliged to fall back, and Pemberton was enabled to retire gracefully into Vicksburg.

Meanwhile Sherman, who was not overtaken with

the news of Grant's disaster, reached the mouth of the Yazoo the day after Christmas. He ascended the river to a point below Haines Bluff, some two hundred feet high, landed his men, and made an assault upon the enemy's strongly fortified position at that place (December 29th). He hoped thus to reach the rear of Vicksburg, cut the railroad, and isolate Pemberton, whom he fondly supposed was having trouble with Grant. He had no means of knowing that Pemberton was then in the city, coolly watching his every operation. The Union general was repulsed, after a gallant attack, with a loss of 175 killed, 930 wounded and over 700 missing. He did not abandon hope, but the whole movement resulted in a disheartening failure, which, as Colonel Dodge truly says, "was not caused by want of courageous effort or intelligent action." Probably it is just as well that Sherman did not effect a lodgment on the hills behind Vicksburg, for his forces might have fallen into any trap that Pemberton chose to lay for them.

The day after New Year's, 1863, Sherman heard that General McClernand was at hand, having been appointed to take command of the "expeditionary force on the Mississippi River." When he was met by McClernand, that general explained the misfortune which had overtaken Grant; and Sherman, choking down his disappointment, was obliged to admit that under these changed circumstances the present movement was hopeless. But in the North there were some critics—"military experts"

of course—who raised the cry that Sherman, although no longer a lunatic, was a "bungler." History has completely vindicated the general, and no one was quicker to aid her in this connection than Grant himself. "The rebel position," he says, "was impregnable against any force that could be brought against its front." [1]

When General McClernand arrived to take command he seems to have had no definite plan of action for opening the navigation of the Mississippi and, as he euphoniously expressed it, "cutting his way to the sea." The sea was there, of course, down below New Orleans, but how was one to "cut" to it? It was finally decided that nothing could be done against Vicksburg for the present, and Sherman, no doubt hoping, with the eagerness of a very human man, to reap some glory from the ill-fated expedition, suggested that they return via the Arkansas River, and attack Arkansas Post, or Fort Hindman—a place over forty miles above its mouth, garrisoned by about 5,000 Confederates. General McClernand consented, after some hesitation, and soon the gunboats of Porter and the transports bearing the troops were steaming up the Mississippi once more. On the 6th of January Sherman is writing to his brother:

"We are now en route for the Arkansas. Up that river the enemy is entrenched. . . . Now

[1] Sherman could not use one-fourth of his force. His efforts to capture the city, or the high ground north of it, were necessarily unavailing.—"Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant."

it is unwise to leave such a force in our rear and flank, and inasmuch as General Grant is not prepared to march down to Vicksburg by land, we can attack this Post of Arkansas, and maybe reach Little Rock. Success in this quarter will have a good effect on the main river. But in the end Vicksburg must be reduced, and it is going to be a hard nut to crack."

And he adds: "I suppose you are now fully convinced of the stupendous energy of the South and their ability to prolong this war indefinitely, but I am further satisfied that if it lasts thirty years we must fight it out, for the moment the North relaxes its energies the South will assume the offensive, and it is wonderful how well disciplined and provided they have their men."

The transports and gunboats finally came within range of Fort Hindman. A bombardment by the latter was followed by an assault from the troops and marines, and the capture of the post, with the taking of 4,800 prisoners and seventeen guns (January 11th). This ended the expedition up the Arkansas, and Grant, who had at first been inclined to disapprove of the movement as an unnecessary side issue, felt all the more confidence in Sherman when he realized the importance of the removal of nearly 5,000 Confederates from the scene.[1]

Sherman has left, in his "Memoirs," a graphic

[1] "Five thousand Confederate troops left in the rear might have caused us much trouble and loss of property while navigating the Mississippi," says Grant.

account of the surrender of the post. "As the gunboats got closer up I saw their flags actually over the parapet of Fort Hindman, and the rebel gunners scamper out of the embrasures and run down into the ditch behind. About the same time a man jumped up on the rebel parapet just where the road entered, waving a large white flag, and numerous smaller white rags appeared above the parapet along the whole line. I immediately ordered, 'Cease firing!' and sent the same word down the line to General Steele, who had made similar progress on the right, following the border of the swamp." Sherman ordered his aide, Colonel Dayton, to jump on his horse and ride straight up to the large white flag; and when Dayton's horse was on the parapet the General followed with the rest of his staff. On entering the line, he saw that the Union guns had done good execution; for there was a horse battery in evidence, and "every horse lay dead in the traces." Dead men were lying around "very thick"; the scene was one of desolation.

Sherman inquired who commanded the Confederates at this point of the line. A certain colonel stepped forward and claimed the honor. When General Churchill, the commander-in-chief of the fort, appeared on the scene, he asked furiously: "Why, colonel, did you display the white flag?"

"I received orders to do so from one of your staff!" answered the colonel, manfully.

Churchill, according to Sherman, angrily denied ever giving such an order, and there was then

enacted an unusual scene—that of two Confederate officers disputing with each other whilst a victorious Union general acted as peacemaker.

"It makes little difference now," remarked Sherman, who, tired and powder-begrimed though he was, must have appreciated the ironical humor of the situation; "you are in our power now!" The officers had the sense to stop quarreling; Fort Hindman was now a Union post.

After the capture, Sherman had an amusing interview with General McClernand, who, by virtue of his appointment, had been theoretically in command of the expedition, and who arrogated to himself the whole credit thereof. McClernand was in high spirits. He exclaimed repeatedly: "Glorious! Glorious! My star is ever in the ascendant!" He spoke of the troops in a complimentary way, but seemed very jealous of the work of Admiral Porter. The admiral had already told Sherman that he felt a "strong prejudice" against the general.

"I'll make a splendid report!" went on McClernand. "It's glorious!" Sherman, who had no exalted opinion of his superior (whom he regarded as that most dangerous specimen of the military species, a "soldier-politician") unromantically answered by asking for something to eat and drink. That night he slept with the colonel who had been engaged in the dispute with General Churchill. The two made some coffee, ate their bread together, and talked politics until quite late, when they sank to sleep on straw saturated with the blood of

dead or wounded men. Such are the contrasts of war.

McClernand ran his erratic course in the Union army, and has long since been forgotten.[1] He lacked one of the greatest gifts of the successful general—the power to hold the confidence of his men. That was a gift that William Tecumseh Sherman was fast acquiring.

The feelings of General Sherman at this juncture may be inferred from a letter he wrote John Sherman from Napoleon, at the junction of the Arkansas River with the Mississippi, where the river expedition rendezvoused after the attack on Fort Hindman. "Mr. Lincoln," he says—and here his wounded pride for once got the better of his judgment and his faith in the President—"intended to insult me and the military profession by putting McClernand over me, and I would have quietly folded up my things and gone to St. Louis, only I knew in times like these all must submit to insult and infamy if necessary. . . . I hope the politicians will not interfere with Halleck. You have driven off McClellan,[2] and is Burnside any better? . . . I never dreamed of so severe a test of my patriotism as being superseded by McClernand, and

[1] John A. McClernand won greater distinction as a politician than he did as a general. He was relieved of his command of an army corps in July, 1863, and resigned from the army November 30, 1864. He lived for many years after the war, and died in September, 1900.

[2] McClellan had been relieved of the command of the Army of the Potomac in November, 1862, while Burnside, his successor, had met disaster at Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862.

if I can keep down my tamed (?) spirit and live I will claim a virtue higher than Brutus." A few days later he says: "The early actors and heroes of the war will be swept away, and those who study its progress, its developments, and divine its course and destiny will be most appreciated. . . . As to making popularity out of it, it is simply ridiculous."

Many of those who did try to "make popularity" out of the war were swept away as leaves before an autumn wind. Sherman, who attended to the business of war in a businesslike way, was to secure popularity and hero-worship because he never groveled for these pleasant evidences of fame.

Some of the higher officers of the Union army, more particularly during the earlier portion of the war, when so many military reputations existed on a precarious tenure, were very energetic in their cultivation of the newspapers, through the correspondents who traveled with the armies. We need hardly point out that this was not one of Sherman's weaknesses. Indeed, just about this time, or several weeks later, characteristically, he was having trouble with one of the newspaper men, a correspondent of the New York *Herald*. The latter had accompanied the general's forces in defiance of orders, and had interspersed certain unauthorized information which he published in the *Herald* with some personal criticisms directed against Sherman himself. He was tried by court martial, found guilty of violating the

orders of the War Department by publishing correspondence concerning military operations without the sanction of the general in command, and sentenced to be removed beyond the lines of the army, not to return again under pain of imprisonment. This sentence was partially revoked by the President, who with his naturally kind heart combined a shrewd wish to retain, as far as possible, the friendship of the press. The offense, said Lincoln, was "technical, rather than wilfully wrong," and he ordered that the correspondent, Thomas W. Knox, be allowed to go to General Grant's headquarters—provided, however, that Grant should give his "express assent" thereto.

But Grant, ever loyal to Sherman, refused this "express assent," and in no uncertain terms. Writing from before Vicksburg (April 6, 1863) he tells Mr. Knox: "You came here first in positive violation of an order from General Sherman. Because you were not pleased with his treatment of army followers who had violated his order, you attempted to break down his influence with his command and to blast his reputation with the public. . . . General Sherman is one of the ablest soldiers and purest men in the country. You have attacked him and been sentenced to expulsion from this department for the offense. While I would conform to the slightest wish of the President where it is formed upon a fair representation of both sides of any question, my respect for General Sherman is such that in this case I must decline,

unless General Sherman first gives his consent, to your remaining."

This was a pretty brave refusal, under the circumstances, for Grant was not yet the power that he later became.

It may be imagined that, as the correspondent did not see fit to apologize, Sherman did not give the required consent. "The insolence of these fellows is insupportable," he wrote to Grant, in thanking him for this refusal. "Mr. Lincoln, of course, fears to incur the enmity of the *Herald*, but he must rule the *Herald* or the *Herald* will rule him; he can take his choice. . . . If the press be allowed to run riot and write up and write down at their pleasure, there is an end to a constitutional government in America, and anarchy must result."

Of course, the question as to the rights of a war correspondent, forms a very delicate problem. The "freedom of the press" is one of the greatest safeguards of any country, yet in time of war a little of that "freedom" may be judiciously curtailed. Abstruse theories as to rights do not find much sympathy in war; as between a general and a journal the general must oftener be the autocrat.

General Force has well summed up these newspaper controversies when he says that Sherman did not appreciate the craving for information of a people wrought to a fever of interest. "He was military in every fibre. His care was to make his army efficient. He saw that the presence of any

non-combatant was, to some extent, an incumbrance." [1]

It is certain that Sherman had no reason to think with sentimental leniency of the outspoken way in which some of the newspapers criticised the conduct of the war. We can fancy him reading the following editorial excerpt from the *Herald*, published just before news of his success at Arkansas Post was received:

"As the full details of the late unsuccessful dash of General Sherman against the rebel defenses of Vicksburg are laid before the country the decline of public confidence in Mr. Lincoln's administration is becoming positively alarming. . . . The clouds of doubt and despondency, which hitherto have been relieved by broad spaces of a clear sky, now seem to overshadow the firmament. With a despairing earnestness never witnessed till now, calm, thinking men are inquiring of each other, Is there any hope for the country from the present administration? and, if none, will not chaos be upon us before the appointed period for the election of another?" (January 16, 1863).

To return to the reduction of Vicksburg. The necessity for such reduction became greater and greater as the days went on, and none the less so because a goodly number of persons in the North, Republicans as well as Democrats, were asking themselves, as the New York *Herald* had indicated, whether the war were not a failure, from the Union standpoint.

[1] "General Sherman," page 114.

After McClernand and his forces had reached Napoleon, succeeding the capture of Arkansas Post, both Sherman and Admiral Porter sent word to Grant asking him to take command in person of any future movement to secure Vicksburg, and expressing their distrust of McClernand's fitness for the direction of so intricate an expedition. So, on the 17th of January, Grant visited the forces at Napoleon, and at once assured himself that McClernand so lacked the confidence of both army and navy that to keep him in command would be an element of grave weakness. "By this time," he says, "I had received authority to relieve McClernand or to assign any person else to the command of the river expedition, or to assume command in person. I felt great embarrassment about McClernand. He was the senior major-general after myself within the department. It would not do, with his rank and ambition, to assign a junior over him. Nothing was left, therefore, but to assume the command myself. I would have been glad to put Sherman in command, to give him an opportunity to accomplish what he had failed in the December before; but there seemed no other way out of the difficulty, for he was junior to McClernand. Sherman's failure needs no apology."

The result was that on January 29th, General Grant arrived at Young's Point, on the Mississippi, above Vicksburg, and assumed personal command of the operations against that city, with a force comprising 50,000 men and Porter's flotilla of gunboats. His army, as now organized, consisted of the Thir-

teenth Corps, under McClernand, the Fifteenth Corps, commanded by General Sherman, the Sixteenth under Hurlbut, and the Seventeenth under the brilliant McPherson. The campaign had begun in earnest. The problem, as Grant saw it, was "to secure a footing upon dry ground on the east side of the Mississippi from which the troops could operate against Vicksburg."

Three schemes were suggested, as follows:

First, to march the army down the west bank of the Mississippi, cross the river below Vicksburg, and co-operate with General Banks, who was commanding an expedition ascending the river from New Orleans.

Second, to make a canal across the peninsula opposite Vicksburg, through which the gunboats and transports could pass, and which was to be kept open as a line of communication for supplies.

Third, to turn the Mississippi from its course by opening a new channel, via Lake Providence, and through various bayous to Red River.

The high water and the general condition of the neighboring country made the first plan impracticable. The second scheme, too, was destined to fail, owing to the breaking of the levees, and the flooding of the country. As to the third method, a force was set to work to develop it, and it was finally found impossible to secure a practicable channel. An attempt to open a route via Yazoo Pass, the Tallahatchie, the Yalabusha and the Yazoo Rivers was also abandoned. There were still no omens of Grant's

future military acumen. But with his usual perseverance, and apparently oblivious to sarcastic observations at the North, he determined to place his army below the fortress of Vicksburg (where Pemberton now had between 25,000 and 30,000 men) and turn Pemberton's left. The latter also had 20,000 men at Grenada and 4,000 at Jackson, Miss. Grant would run the river batteries with the gun-boats and transports loaded with supplies, march his troops down the west side of the river to the vicinity of New Carthage, below Vicksburg, and then ferry them across to the east bank. It was a desperate attempt—and to its successful outcome Sherman contributed his full share.

A part of the latter's corps was sent up the river to make a diversion against Pemberton, and this work was finely accomplished. McClernand was ordered to New Carthage; the transports and gun-boats successfully passed the batteries at Vicksburg. At the end of April Grant joined McClernand, and then marched to a point opposite Grand Gulf, twenty miles south of Vicksburg. Pemberton, thinking that this was merely a demonstration, took more heed to his right at Haines Bluff, where Sherman was making the necessary pretense of activity. In this instance, at least, the latter proved himself an able diplomat.

Charles A. Dana, who had recently joined the forces operating against Vicksburg, in order to give Lincoln and Secretary Stanton his private views of the efficiency of Grant—then considered a doubtful

quantity at Washington—furnishes an attractive estimate of Sherman about this time. "Everything I saw of Sherman," he says, "increased my admiration for him. He was a very brilliant man, and an excellent commander of a corps. Sherman's information was great, and he was a clever talker. He always liked to have people about who could keep up with his conversation; besides, he was genial and unaffected. I particularly admired his loyalty to Grant. He had criticised the plan of campaign frankly in the first place, but had supported every movement with all his energy. . . . It is a little remarkable that the three chief figures in this great Vicksburg campaign—Grant, Sherman, and McPherson,—were all born in Ohio. The utmost cordiality and confidence existed between these three men, and it always seemed to me that much of the success achieved in these marches and battles was owing to this very fact. There was no jealousy or bickering, and in their unpretending simplicity they were as alike as three peas." [1]

Before this Sherman had written to his brother: "Mr. Dana is here. He spent a few hours with me yesterday, and I went over with him many of the events of the past year, with the maps and records with which I am well supplied. Indeed all look to me for maps and facts. Dana remarked to one of Grant's staff, incidentally, that he was better pleased with me than he could possibly have expected."

[1] "Recollections of the Civil War." Dana was sent to the front ostensibly as a special commissioner to investigate pay accounts.

How Grand Bluff was finally evacuated by the enemy; how Grant, by a series of brilliant yet hazardous manœuvres, wherein Sherman assisted so admirably, defeated Pemberton at Champion's Hill and then drove him back into the defenses of Vicksburg; how the enemy became demoralized; how Pemberton was adroitly "cooped up"—all these features of the campaign are familiar tales. Sherman, McClernand and McPherson now invested the works built by the Confederates for the defense of the city. It seemed like poetic justice that Sherman, on his line of march against Vicksburg, should have been led to the very point on the Yazoo River bluffs (May 19th) occupied by the enemy in the December before, when he met with repulse. In securing this position he and Grant, stirred by impatience, moved in front of their column and "well up with the advanced skirmishers." There were some detached works along the crest of the hill, and for a short time the Confederate bullets whistled merrily over the heads, and on each side, of the two generals. How the history of the war might have been changed if some of the flying lead had hit these two shining marks! But they reached the crest in safety; the bullets ceased to rain; Sherman looked down with unconcealed pleasure from the spot once so fondly coveted. "He turned to me," relates Grant, "saying that up to this minute he had felt no positive assurance of success. This, however, he said, was the end of one of the greatest campaigns in history, and I ought to make a report of it at once."

Vicksburg, added Sherman, was not yet captured, and there was "no telling what might happen before it was taken, but whether captured or not, this was a complete and successful campaign."

It is impossible to underestimate the triumph which must have filled Grant and his colleague as they looked back at Vicksburg, and felt how completely they had hemmed in the place. At last Grant had shown the world that he was no crack-brained schemer. "We all knew," writes Sherman, "that General McClernand was still intriguing against General Grant, in hopes to regain the command of the whole expedition, and that others were raising a clamor against General Grant in the newspapers at the North. Even Mr. Lincoln and General Halleck seemed to be shaken, but at no instant of time did we, his personal friends, slacken in our loyalty to him." And so the loyalty of Sherman was vindicated as he gazed exultantly from the Yazoo bluffs. No more talk of a crazy Sherman, no more talk of a drunken, incompetent Grant. Even if the latter did drink, his brain had not been fuddled thereby.

Grant soon found that the Confederate works were too strong to be taken by assault. "We have assaulted at five distinct points at two distinct times," Sherman tells his brother, in a letter dated May 29th, "and failed to cross the parapet. Our loss was heavy, and we are now approaching with pick and shovel. . . . In the meantime we are daily pouring into the city a perfect storm of shot and

shells, and our sharp-shooters are close up and fire at any head that is rash enough to show itself above ground."

Several days later Mr. Dana, who was in General Grant's headquarters, on a high bluff northeast of Sherman's extreme left, wrote to his little daughter: "Every night I sleep with one side of the tent wide open and the walls put up all around to get plenty of air. Sometimes I wake up in the night, and think it is raining, the wind roars so in the tops of the great oak forest on the hillside where we are encamped, and I think it is thundering till I look out and see the golden moonlight in all its glory, and listen again and know that it is only the thunder of General Sherman's great guns, that neither rest nor let others rest by night or by day." Sherman was, indeed, full of activity throughout this extraordinary campaign.

Grant had now settled down to a regular state of siege; or, in other words, he saw that he must starve out the garrison which, skilfully entrenched, well-armed and stout-hearted, was making so valiant a defense. Soon the Union engineers were constructing trenches and batteries, while the firing from army and navy kept on increasing. In the city Pemberton, full of anxiety, was cutting down the rations of his men and wondering whether General Joseph E. Johnston would come to his relief with reinforcements. Johnston, as we know, never successfully aided Pemberton, although he took the field and obliged Grant to detail General Blair with

six brigades to hold him in check. Then Grant received reinforcements; seventy thousand men now threatened Vicksburg; its investment was more complete than before. The engineers continued their mining operations, while the men within the fortress waxed thinner, and the heart of Pemberton grew more troubled. In the meantime, General McClernand was relieved of his command, after Sherman and McPherson had complained of a "fulsome" order which he had published to his own corps, the Thirteenth, and which did gross injustice to the soldiers of the other corps. The star of this soldier-politician was no longer "in the ascendant."

On the 22d of June Grant received information that General Johnston had crossed the Big Black River, in order to attack the Union forces in the rear, and thus raise the siege. He at once ordered Sherman to the command of all the troops from Haines Bluff, on the Yazoo, to Big Black River—a force numbering quite half the troops about Vicksburg. But Johnston abstained from assaulting the besiegers, and wisely so, as Grant thought, "because it would simply have inflicted loss on both sides without accomplishing any result." By this time, outside help failing, the garrison was doomed. The "Yankees" began to boast that they would celebrate the coming Fourth of July in Vicksburg. The picket lines of the contending forces were so close to each other, in places, that the "Yanks" and "Rebs" could carry on an animated conversation. "When are you coming into town?" asked a

Confederate picket. "On the Fourth!" replied a "Yank," and the boast was not an idle one.

It was while Sherman was watching for the expected approach of General Johnston that he had one of those curious experiences which are possible only in a fratricidal conflict. As he was riding along his line, near a farm known as "Parson" Fox's, he heard that the family of a General W——, of Louisiana, were "refugeeing" in the neighborhood. The wife of this general happened to be spending the day at "Parson" Fox's, and thither Sherman went, for he found that her son had been one of his pupils in the military academy in Louisiana. He rode into the place accompanied by his staff and escort, and discovered "Parson" Fox and a number of ladies sitting on the porch. To one of these ladies, who was Mrs. W——, Sherman politely introduced himself, explaining that he was the same Sherman who had been superintendent at Alexandria, and inquiring, in kindly fashion, after her son, the cadet.

Mrs. W—— replied that the boy was at that moment inside of Vicksburg, serving as an artillery lieutenant.

"And how is your husband, General W——?" inquired Sherman, in his desire to be courteous, for he had known the general before the war.

The poor woman burst into tears. "You killed him at Bull Run, where he was fighting for his country!" she cried. At this all the women on the porch went into hysterical lamentations, and the discomfited Sherman beat a hasty retreat. He

could face a great army, but not the tears of a heart-broken wife.

This interview, however, did not end the incident. It was the day before the Fourth of July when, as Sherman sat at his bivouac by the roadside, he saw a wretched horse, led by a small pickaninny, coming across a cotton-field toward him. Upon the horse was Mrs. W——, presenting a sad and dreary spectacle.

Sherman ran forward, helped the unhappy lady to dismount, and asked what had brought her out in such guise.

"I *know* that Vicksburg is going to surrender," she cried, "and I want to go there right away to see my boy!"

Sherman tried to dissuade her from the attempt, and did all he could to console her; but she held her point with all the warm-hearted obstinacy of a mother who must see her child and will not be denied. At last the general, who could not forget that he had children of his own, gracefully surrendered. He gave her a letter to General Grant, asking him to give the mother the earliest opportunity of seeing her son. There was a distance of about twenty miles between Sherman and Grant, but off the lady rode on her scrawny charger, and it is pleasant to know that she finally saw the boy, who had escaped unharmed from the shot and shell fired into the fortifications. A few hours later Sherman received word from Grant that negotiations for the surrender of Vicksburg were in progress.

About ten o'clock on this very morning white flags suddenly appeared on portions of the Confederate works. At last the starving-out process, so much grimmer and so much surer than a hundred assaults, had won. General Pemberton sent two of his officers to Grant, bearing a letter proposing an armistice, with capitulation in view. "I make this proposition," he wrote, with a bravado that a conqueror might pardon, "to save the further effusion of blood, which might otherwise be shed to a frightful extent,—feeling myself fully able to maintain my position for a yet indefinite period." [1]

Grant was like Sherman, in that he always had a chivalrous respect for the courage of the South—unlike certain stay-at-home politicians who never could speak of Confederates save as "cowardly traitors," etc. He replied to Pemberton that he would expect the unconditional surrender of the city and garrison, but he added: "Men who have shown so much endurance and courage as those now in Vicksburg will always challenge the respect of an adversary, and I can assure you will be treated with all the respect due to prisoners of war."

After a meeting and some correspondence between Grant and Pemberton, the latter yielded up Vicksburg. About 31,000 prisoners were surrendered on parole, together with 172 cannon, some 60,000 muskets, and a large quantity of ammunition. On the

[1] After Grant entered Vicksburg he saw Union soldiers taking bread from their haversacks, and handing it to their late enemies. "It was accepted with avidity and with thanks."

afternoon of the same day, the Fourth of July, Grant sent the following despatch to Halleck :

"The enemy surrendered this morning. The only terms allowed is their parole as prisoners of war. This I regard as a great advantage to us at this moment. . . . Sherman, with a large force, moves immediately on Johnston, to drive him from the state."

The capture of Vicksburg, coming at the same time as the defeat of General Lee at Gettysburg, carried joyousness and hope into the hearts of the loyal Northerners. The croakers began to hide their diminished heads, and Grant and Sherman were acclaimed the heroes of the day—while Meade, McPherson and the others also soon learned the truth of the axiom that nothing succeeds like success. The Confederates surrendered Port Hudson on July 9th ; the Mississippi River was now in possession of the Federal forces ; and the Army of the Tennessee was enabled to unite with the Army of the Gulf, thus making a line of division in the Confederate states. Furthermore, Pennsylvania no longer stood in fear of an invasion by Lee.

With a pride that may easily be condoned, after the slurs he had suffered, Sherman writes to his brother : "The fall of Vicksburg, and consequent capitulation of Port Hudson, the opening of the navigation of the Mississippi, and now the driving out of this great valley the only strong army that threatened us, complete as pretty a page in the history of war and of our country as ever you could

ask my name to be identified with. The share I have personally borne in all these events is one in which you may take pride for me. You know I have avoided notoriety, and the press, my standard enemy, may strip me of all popular applause; but not a soldier of the Army of the Tennessee but knows the part I have borne in this great drama, and the day will come when that army will speak in a voice that cannot be drowned."

The press, however, generously accorded due praise to the victorious generals. Even the New York *Herald*, once so lugubrious, became almost ecstatic. "New York was electrified," it says, "with the joyful news of the surrender of Vicksburg on the Fourth of July. Of all the days in the calendar this was the day to give the most powerful moral effect, in the loyal and in the rebellious states, to this great achievement. The splendid victory of General Meade, on the 3d in Pennsylvania, and this magnificent triumph of General Grant on the 'glorious Fourth,' a thousand miles away on the Mississippi, are two of the most remarkable, ominous and appropriate events, in a chronological view, of all the strange and wonderful coincidences of the war. We may now say, without a misgiving or reservation, that not only have we broken the backbone, but the head and front of the Rebellion; that its days are numbered, and that a general collapse from Virginia to Texas is close at hand." And gaining in enthusiasm, as the leader continues down the page, the *Herald* predicts that Lee's retreating

army will speedily be captured or cut to pieces. "In anticipation of this decisive work, we may say that even at this moment the rebellion is suppressed" (July 8, 1863).

The *Herald* of course was going too fast. Lee's army escaped, and although the "backbone" of the Rebellion was broken, the "head" was not crushed until nearly two years later. There was still great work to do, with Sherman as one of the chief participants. For his services in the Vicksburg campaign he was made a brigadier-general in the regular army, with a commission to date, appropriately, from July 4, 1863. He was now ready for greater things.

## CHAPTER VI

### SHADOWS OF COMING EVENTS

As soon as General Johnston heard of the fall of Vicksburg he retired with his army to Jackson, Miss., being "too late," as he telegraphed to the Richmond government, to retrieve the campaign. A number of critics, including some on his own side of Mason and Dixon's line, seemed to think that he might have been more aggressive in his attempts to help General Pemberton. But, for the matter of that, Pemberton was criticised for his necessary surrender. Failure in war always brings a variety of condemnation, just and unjust.

Sherman, with a force raised to nearly 50,000 men, crossed the Big Black River and concentrated his army within twenty miles of Jackson. The march was a distressing one, owing to the intense heat; nor did the fact that the streams crossed by the columns were filled with dead cattle, thrown there by the swiftly retreating Confederates, make the movement any more attractive. Sherman, however, was always prompt in his marches; he was soon closely besieging Johnston at Jackson, and shelling the town from every direction. The latter was in no position to stand an operation of this character, so he made preparations to slip away quietly to the eastward.

On the morning of July 17th Sherman found the place evacuated, and so took possession of it. Pursuit was useless. There were, of course, a number of Confederate sick and wounded whom Johnston was obliged to leave behind. To these Sherman issued medicines and food, while a large quantity of rations was given to the half-starved families living in the town. This was only a fair exchange, when it is considered that Grant's army, by foraging, had laid waste the country for fifty miles around Vicksburg. Grant himself (who was now a major-general in the regular army) had thus written to Sherman: "Impress upon the men the importance of going through the state in an orderly manner, abstaining from taking anything not absolutely necessary for their subsistence while traveling. They should try to create as favorable an impression as possible upon the people." Evidently the time was not yet ripe for the advent of Sherman's "bummers"—those light-fingered gentlemen who were destined to make his name execrated for a generation in the South.

Sherman was now ordered back to Vicksburg. Near the city he encamped his corps, and remained inactive for a short time. While here his heart must have been gladdened by a letter which he received from John Sherman. "With you," says the senator, "it [the press] has been especially laudatory. Even your old enemy, the Cincinnati *Gazette*, has in several recent numbers spoken of you in very complimentary terms and without any apparent

recollection that it has libeled you for months. Indeed, it is now unnecessary for you to care for defenders." [1]

We may defy newspaper opinion as we will, but we are all human enough to rejoice when a journal changes from an enemy into a friend. And thus Sherman was happy, as he looked after army routine, with Vicksburg in the near distance, and pursued his favorite occupations of letter-writing and anathematizing the politicians. One long and interesting letter was addressed to General Halleck, in response to an invitation to submit certain ideas, which might be conveyed to Mr. Lincoln, on the coming question of "reconstruction" in Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas. The gist of Sherman's advice was to "raise the draft to its maximum, fill the present regiments to as large a standard as possible, and push the war, pure and simple." In this communication it will also be seen that the writer, impelled by his own line of thinking, the inevitable trend of military operations, and the passions naturally engendered by what he calls a "fratricidal war," had developed into a species of radical. He was not an "Abolitionist," or a mawkish sentimentalist about the "poor colored brother," but yet as much of a radical in his way as was Mr. Jefferson Davis in *his* way.

"I would deem it very unwise at this time, or for years to come," he wrote to Halleck, "to revive the state governments of Louisiana, etc., or to institute

[1] "The Sherman Letters," page 210.

in this quarter any civil government in which the local people have much to say. They had a government so mild and paternal that they gradually forgot they had any at all, save what they themselves controlled; they asserted an absolute right to seize public moneys, forts, arms, and even to shut up the natural avenues of commerce. They chose *war*—they ignored and denied all the obligations of the solemn contract of government, and appealed to force. We accepted the issue, and now they begin to realize that war is a two-edged sword."

This was a slightly different view from that of Jefferson Davis, who afterward in referring to these times, spoke of "those terrible scenes of wrong and blood in which the government of the United States, driven to desperation by our successful resistance, broke through every restraint of the Constitution, of national law, of justice, and of humanity." [1] Sherman's stand was somewhat different, too, from the one he had taken less than four years before, when he wrote to John Sherman, from Louisiana, that "it would be the height of folly to drive the South to desperation." But such a change in sentiment was inevitable. Sherman's views grew fiery, perforce, just as did the views of many honest Southerners. The time for compromise on either side had passed; North and South alike threw charity to the winds, and engaged in a death struggle. Truly "war is cruelty."

[1] From the London edition of "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government"; Volume II, Part IV, page 1.

In this letter to Halleck General Sherman makes some pungent remarks anent the people living along the borders of the Mississippi River. He divides them into four classes: namely, the "large planters" (in some districts "bitter as gall," in other sections "conservative"); the "smaller farmers, mechanics, merchants and laborers" ("three-quarters of the whole," led into the war "on the false theory that they were to be benefited somehow—they knew not how"); the "Union men of the South"; and the "young bloods of the South." For the third class, over which it was the fashion at the North to waste some foolish sympathy, the writer expresses the most profound contempt. "Afraid of shadows, they submit tamely to squads of dragoons, and permit them, without a murmur, to burn their cotton, take their horses, corn and everything; and, when we reach them, they are full of complaints if our men take a few fence-rails for fire, or corn to feed our horses. They give us no assistance or information, and are loudest in their complaints at the smallest excesses of our soldiers. Their sons, horses, arms, and everything useful, are in the army against us, and they stay at home, claiming all the exemptions of peaceful citizens."

Sherman would have had much more respect for these "Union men of the South" had they been in the Confederate army. He ever despised "trimmers." Nowadays no one sheds a tear over these men. In this twentieth century, when we look at

the war with calm feelings, we like to think of the Southerners who fought for the Confederacy and the Northerners who fought for the Union—not of "copperheads" in either camp.

Of the fourth class General Sherman gives Halleck a short but picturesque description which makes us almost regret that our hero after the war never turned his attention to writing as a fine art. "Sons of planters, lawyers about towns, good billiard players, and sportsmen, men who never did work and never will. War suits them and the rascals are brave, fine riders, bold to rashness, and dangerous subjects in every sense. They care not a sou for niggers, land, or anything. They hate Yankees, *per se*, and don't bother their brains about the past, present or future. As long as they have good horses, plenty of forage, and an open country they are happy. . . . At present horses cost them nothing, for they take what they find, and don't bother their brains as to who is to pay for them; the same may be said of the corn-fields, which have, as they believe, been cultivated by a good-natured people for their especial benefit. We propose to share with them the free use of these corn-fields, planted by willing hands, that will never gather the crops."

On the same day that he writes to Halleck, Sherman sends a few lines to General Rawlins, Grant's devoted friend and staff officer. At one time, he tells Rawlins, he (Sherman) was considered "unsound" by the authorities at Washington, because

he would not "go it blind" into the war; "now that I insist on war pure and simple, with no admixture of civil compromises, I am supposed vindictive." And he quotes the advice of Polonius to Laertes: "Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in, bear it, that the opposed may beware of thee." There were still worthy souls in the North, be it remembered, who hoped for some sort of "civil compromises" and an immediate cessation of the war.

Thus Sherman whiled away his rare leisure with the pen. It is curious to reflect, by the way, that while he and Grant were so alike in some respects, they differed very radically in this amusement of letter-writing, as well as in the art of purely vocal expression. Unlike Sherman, Grant at all times resisted the temptation to talk and write. "He was apparently always striving to do as much as he could with the least possible use of words." This was a virtue that particularly commended him to Lincoln. He never wrote a letter if he could avoid it, and what he had to write was in general directly to the point. "When the whole country would be sounding his praises he would be silently preparing for his next splendid triumph, and when his detractors would be most active in trying to humiliate and to ruin him he would preserve the same quiet demeanor and pursue the same steadfast course."

The contrast between the two men only makes their friendship the more attractive. The taciturnity of Grant fitted in well with the impulsiveness of his

colleague. And there were, too, other differences of temperament. Long after the war a writer who had studied the methods and personal qualities of both generals pointed out that their similar education at West Point had not cast them in the same mould of thought and feeling. The one looked at things with a serenity that seemed little less than heroic, whereas the other was easily susceptible to causes of excitement. "While Grant could sit upon his horse at the crisis of a battle, coolly smoking a cigar as he gave orders of vital significance, Sherman could not remain still for a moment, but would show in every way the keenest anxiety and enthusiasm. It was impossible to tell from the expression of the former's face how an engagement was going, but the latter's features plainly advertised each successive advance or repulse. . . . There was no movement that they executed in exactly the same manner. They observed the same general rules, but applied them with variations of detail that were no less curious than characteristic —and, somehow, the final results were usually such as to vindicate both processes."[1]

Grant was a man of infinite patience; Sherman (save in certain military movements where common sense warned him to be otherwise) was a man of infinite impatience. It was not in his nature to conceal his honest sentiments, or to think that speech was made to hide thought, or to wait patiently for time to rectify abuses or injustices. "The fault

[1] St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, February 22, 1891.

would have been a grave one in a man more disposed to do injury and less capable of correcting a blunder, but in Sherman it was readily forgivable, because of his sterling integrity and his unfailing magnanimity."

It has been said that Sherman was a firmer believer in strategy than Grant. Yet we all know that he was no blind servitor of this same strategy. He was a thorough organizer and a great admirer of tactics and discipline; but he also reserved the right to be original, and, if necessary, unconventional, in military matters. While he desired his battalions to be well-appointed and skilfully handled, he was not (as Colonels Bowman and Irwin well say) "one of those cool, methodical and tenacious" generals bent on owing everything to tactics and nothing to Fortune. Nor yet would he rely too much on that fickle lady. His theory, so far as it can be described, was, "first to have a properly appointed and duly proportioned army equal to the undertaking in hand; next, to school his army in tactics, so as to make it capable of quick and accurate movement; then to accustom it to battle in minor engagements and secondary victories; and, finally, to strike home for grand results." In short, Sherman, as we shall see, had the mind to invent a colossal movement and the executive ability to carry it out. More than that could not have been asked of Napoleon. The latter was inclined to believe, despite his fatalism, that the gods generally favored the strongest battalions.

Whilst Sherman was lying idle in camp near Vicksburg, on the west bank of the Big Black, the eastern bank was watched by a division of Confederate cavalry. One day a flag of truce, borne by a Louisville captain, with an escort of twenty men or more, was dispatched from this division into the Union camp. Sherman, taking the part of host rather than that of the enemy, invited the captain and another Confederate officer to come into his tent and "make themselves at home." The captain had brought a sealed letter for Grant, which was forwarded to Vicksburg. In the evening Sherman treated the two officers to a good supper, which they doubtless appreciated (provisions not being very plentiful just then among the Southerners around Vicksburg), and supplemented the meal with wine and good cigars. Of course, the conversation turned upon the conflict that was raging.

"What is the use of your persevering?" asked the captain. "It is simply impossible to subdue 8,000,000 people—and the feeling in the South has become so embittered that a reconciliation is out of the question."

"Sitting as we now are, we appear pretty comfortable," remarked Sherman, dryly, "and surely there seems to be no trouble in *our* being friends."

"Yes, that is very true of *us*," answered the Confederate, "but we are gentlemen of education, and can easily adapt ourselves to any condition of things. This, however, would not apply equally well to the common people, or to the common soldiers."

Sherman did not answer in words. He merely led the captain out to the camp-fires behind his tent, and pointed to the members of the Confederate escort, who were contentedly drinking coffee and hobnobbing with Union soldiers.

"What do you think of that?" asked the general.

"I must admit that you have the best of the argument," said the captain, very handsomely, and thus the discussion ended. Sherman's views as to the quickness with which the two sections could be reconciled would have been speedily vindicated at the close of the war had it not been for the crimes committed by venal Northern politicians in the name of "Reconstruction." The sending of rascally "carpet-baggers" into the South, and the mistake of granting the elective franchise to the negro—the dangerous policy of trying to put the black race over the white race, a policy which no self-respecting Northerner would ever stand in his own section—delayed for years the resumption of really friendly relations between North and South.

During this period the Army of the Cumberland, under General Rosecrans, was moving against Bragg at Chattanooga; and the Army of the Ohio, under Burnside, was marching toward east Tennessee. Then Bragg, reinforced by Longstreet from Virginia, drew out of Chattanooga, crossed Chickamauga Creek, and fell upon General Thomas, commanding the left of Rosecrans' army (September 19th). The results of this action—the splendid courage of Thomas in the midst of a routed army;

Rosecrans' frantic efforts to rally the right; the bottling up of the Army of the Cumberland in Chattanooga—are exciting chapters of our war record. That army, which had lost some seventeen thousand men, was now practically besieged. The soldiers penned up there were in actual peril of starvation; the situation was more than dangerous, and the government at Washington was in a state bordering on panic. Some alarmists were asking themselves whether the capture of Vicksburg and the victory at Gettysburg were to have any real value, after all. Bragg now took possession of Missionary Ridge, overlooking Chattanooga, and also occupied Lookout Mountain, west of the town, which had been abandoned by Rosecrans.

Reinforcements, under General Hooker, were hurried from the east, while Halleck sent word to Grant to despatch at once toward Chattanooga such troops as he could spare. Sherman was ordered to take the major part of his corps from the Big Black to the same destination, via Memphis, it being understood that he should move from that city eastward, repairing railroads as he progressed.

Just after the arrival of General Sherman and Mrs. Sherman in Memphis, his little boy, Willie, died there of typhoid fever.[1] The parents were almost heart-broken, and Sherman bitterly reproached himself for having allowed the child to visit him in the camp on the Big Black, "in that sickly region," in the summer time. To the captain

[1] October 3, 1863.

of a battalion of regulars acting as an escort at the boy's funeral, General Sherman afterward addressed a letter of thanks which, in its pathos, and in the domestic light it shed upon its writer, formed a strong contrast to the stern, grim duties of war then engaging his attention.

"For myself I ask no sympathy," he says. "On, on, I must go, to meet a soldier's fate, or live to see our country rise superior to all factions, till its flag is adored and respected by ourselves and by all the powers of the earth. But Willie was, or thought he was, a sergeant in the Thirteenth [United States Regulars]. I have seen his eye brighten, his heart beat as he beheld the battalion under arms, and asked me if they were not *real* soldiers. Child as he was, he had the enthusiasm, the pure love of truth, honor, and love of country, which should animate all soldiers. . . . Please convey to the battalion my heart-felt thanks, and assure each and all that if in after years they call on me or mine, and mention that they were of the Thirteenth Regulars when Willie was a sergeant, they will have a key to the affections of my family that will open all it has, that we will share with them our last blanket, our last crust."

Sherman, however, had little time to indulge his grief. War would not wait. About the middle of October General Grant was called from Vicksburg and sent in person to the relief of Rosecrans at Chattanooga, being put in command of the "Mili-

tary Division of the Mississippi" (comprising the Armies of the Ohio, Cumberland and Tennessee) and authorized to replace Rosecrans by the steadier George H. Thomas. On Sherman now devolved the command of the Army of the Tennessee. He had already set off on a special train for the scene of the siege on Sunday morning, the 11th of October (after putting his whole force in motion) with the battalion of the Thirteenth Regulars as an escort. On that trip our general had a narrow escape from being taken prisoner by the Confederates.

As the special was running about half a mile beyond the station of Colliersville, twenty-five or twenty-six miles out of Memphis, Sherman, who was peacefully dozing in the rear car with his staff, awoke to find the engine slackening in speed. The train soon stopped. Noticing soldiers running to and fro outside, Sherman leaped from the car, and saw dashing toward him, on horseback, Colonel Anthony, who commanded a Union post at this point. "My pickets have just been driven in," cried the officer, "and there is appearance of an attack by a large force of rebel cavalry coming from the southeast!"

Sherman, ever ready for a brush, at once ordered the soldiers on the train to form on a little hill near the railroad cut. This they did. Soon a Confederate officer, bearing a white flag, came riding boldly up, and explaining that he was the adjutant of General Chalmers, demanded, in the latter's name, the surrender of the place. Sherman

was in an extremely precarious position, but he retained that presence of mind and exhibited that resourcefulness which never deserted him before the enemy. He refused to capitulate, and, the moment the Confederate had ridden off to report to Chalmers, he hurried one of his staff back to the railroad station at Colliersville, with directions to telegraph for help to General John M. Corse, who was marching along from Memphis with the Fourth Division of the corps. Soon the urgent message was flashed over the wires, while Sherman had the train backed quickly into the station. Near the platform was a small earth redoubt. The depot building itself was of brick, and had been punctured with loop holes; several hundred yards eastward was a square earthwork or fort, in which some of the regulars were stationed, with soldiers of the post already there. Other troops were distributed into the railroad cut, and in some rifle-trenches.

Then, on a ridge to the southward, four hundred yards distant, a number of Confederate cavalry began to appear, ominously forming there in a long line. To add to the excitement, two parties of horsemen came galloping along the tracks, one on each side of the railroad. Soon many of the cavalrymen were dismounting, preparing to assault; lines of skirmishers came running through a corn-field, and some artillery which the enemy had mysteriously brought into play began to operate on the little Union garrison. Sherman would have been justified in giving himself up for lost, so far as relieving

Rosecrans or Thomas was concerned. The Confederates greatly outnumbered his own force, and had advantages in position and artillery. But he handled the situation with rare tact and skill. He ordered his men to keep well under cover, and as they were practiced shots (having acquired that useful experience when before Vicksburg) they succeeded in driving the cavalrymen back in the face of several dashing assaults. Once the enemy seized the train, and secured five horses, among them Sherman's favorite mare; once, too, they set fire to the cars, but a sortie was made from the miniature fort, and the flames were extinguished. It would not have been long, however, before the besieged party must have surrendered, if help, thanks to that telegraph message, had not been at hand. After nearly four hours of fighting, the Confederates suddenly drew off and disappeared. General Corse's division, marching on double quick time, had come to the rescue. The next day Sherman resumed his journey.

After reaching Corinth, he pushed forward, making railroad repairs on the way, until he received the following despatch (27th of October):

"Drop all work on Memphis and Charleston Railroad, cross the Tennessee, and hurry eastward with all possible despatch toward Bridgeport, till you meet further orders from me.

"U. S. Grant."

Thereupon Sherman hastened to Bridgeport, and there received another telegram, as a result of which he reached Chattanooga, on the 14th of November

and was warmly welcomed by Grant and Thomas. Many were the compliments which were paid him for his briskness in coming to the relief of the besieged army. The next morning Sherman walked out with Grant, and viewed from the defenses of the city, the grand panorama spread out before them. "All along Missionary Ridge were the tents of the rebel beleaguering force; the lines of trenches from Lookout up toward the Chickamauga were plainly visible, and rebel sentinels, in a continuous chain, were walking their posts in plain view, not a thousand yards off."

Sherman turned to Grant. "Why, you *are* besieged!" he said. And Grant answered, stolidly but expressively, "Yes, it's too true." He added that the horses and mules of Thomas's army were almost starving, and that provisions had been so scarce that the men, "in hunger, stole the few grains of corn that were given to favorite horses." Grant also went on to say that General Bragg, at whose headquarters on Missionary Ridge they were now gazing, had detached Longstreet up into east Tennessee, to capture the Union forces under General Burnside, who, having occupied Knoxville, was now in great danger. "I want your troops to take the offensive *first*," said the general, with emphasis. The situation was almost desperate; he depended upon Sherman to help extricate him from the perilous position into which the force had been led by the blundering of Rosecrans.

The ensuing battles of Chattanooga, Lookout

Mountain, and Missionary Ridge, have been succinctly described as "parts of one single engagement, having for object to drive Bragg from the position he had chosen."[1] This was the plan of action:

Sherman was to move up the Tennessee, on the north side, opposite Chattanooga, with four divisions; cross, under cover of artillery, near the mouth of Chickamauga Creek, on a pontoon bridge; and attack and capture the north end of Missionary Ridge. Thomas was to concentrate in Chattanooga Valley, while General Hooker was to patrol Lookout Valley, making a diversion to assist Sherman. Throughout the whole movement Grant showed what complete trust he placed in Sherman.

General Sherman got his command over to the hills opposite the mouth of the Chickamauga by the 23d of November, driving the Confederates from the north end of Missionary Ridge on the 24th, but found an obstacle in his way in the shape of a deep depression or gap. "I had inferred," he says in his report to Rawlins, "that Missionary Ridge was a continuous hill; but we found ourselves on two high points, with a deep depression between us and the one immediately over the tunnel, which was my chief objective point. The ground we had gained, however, was so important that I could leave nothing to chance, and ordered it to be forti-

[1] See a "Bird's Eye View of Our Civil War"; also consult the memoirs of Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, the several lives of General Thomas, etc.

fied during the night. The enemy felt our left flank about 4 P. M., and a pretty smart engagement with artillery and muskets ensued, when he drew off; but it cost us dear, for General Giles A. Smith was severely wounded, and had to go to the rear. . . . As night closed in, I ordered General Jefferson C. Davis to keep one of his brigades at the bridge, one close up to my position, and one intermediate. Thus we passed the night, heavy details being kept busy at work on the entrenchments on the hill. During the night the sky cleared away bright, a cold frost filled the air, and our campfires revealed to the enemy and to our friends in Chattanooga our position on Missionary Ridge."

At midnight Sherman received an order from Grant, directing him to attack the enemy at dawn with notice that General Thomas was to "attack in force early in the day." Accordingly Sherman was in the saddle before sunrise (November 25th), and attended by his staff, was preparing his brigades. As we have seen, a rather wide valley lay between his forces and the next hill of the series, and the farther point of this hill was held by the enemy with a breastwork of logs and fresh earth, occupied by men and two guns. The enemy was also seen in great force on a still higher hill beyond the tunnel. The sun had hardly risen when General Corse completed his preparations for his brigade to attack from the right centre, and his bugle was soon sounding that most inspiring of all calls to the brave soldier—"Forward!" Other brigades were to aid him at the

proper moment. Corse now quickly moved down the face of the hill held by the Union troops, and steadily, gallantly, up that held by the enemy, until he found and seized a secondary crest about eighty yards away from their intrenchments. Then came a stirring assault by the Federal battalions, a stubborn defense by the Confederates, but through the hour's fierce contest, Corse valiantly kept his original position. Another brigade was now gaining ground on the left spurs of Missionary Ridge ; more troops were aiding from various directions; Sherman was carefully directing every movement.

About ten o'clock in the morning General Corse, receiving a severe wound, was taken from the field, and the command of the assault devolved on a young Colonel (Walcutt of the Forty-sixth Ohio) who "fulfilled his part manfully," pressed forward, and was later joined by energetic reinforcements. The enemy, being massed in great strength in the tunnel-gorge, suddenly appeared on the right rear of the new troops, who, exposed as they were in the open field, fell back in disorder, but soon reformed. The real attacking columns were not repulsed. They struggled heroically throughout the better part of the day.

"Thus matters stood," officially reports Sherman, "about 3 P. M. The day was bright and clear, and the amphitheatre at Chattanooga lay in beauty at our feet. . . . Column after column of the enemy was streaming toward me ; gun after gun poured its

concentric shot on us, from every hill and spur that gave a view of any part of the ground held by us. An occasional shot from Fort Wood and Orchard Knoll, and some musketry-fire and artillery over about Lookout Mountain, was all that I could detect on our side; but about 3 P. M. I noticed the white line of musketry-fire in front of Orchard Knoll, extending farther and farther right and left and on. We could only hear a faint echo of sound, but enough was seen to satisfy me that General Thomas was at last moving on the centre. I knew that our attack had drawn vast masses of the enemy to our flank, and felt sure of the result. Some guns which had been firing on us all day were silent, or were turned in a different direction. The advancing line of musketry-fire from Orchard Knoll disappeared to us behind a spur of the hill, and could no longer be seen; and it was not until night closed in that I knew that the troops in Chattanooga had swept across Missionary Ridge, and broken the enemy's centre. Of course the victory was won."

Sherman found that he had indeed borne a victor's share in the great three-sided battle which caused the retreat of Bragg and the raising of the siege of Chattanooga. Grant's strategy had prevailed. On the 24th of November Thomas, making a forcible movement in Chattanooga Valley, had advanced his line, while General Hooker had fought the "Battle above the Clouds," on Lookout Mountain. On the following day Hooker operated toward Rossville, on Bragg's left, while the Army of

the Cumberland, under Thomas, made a magnificent onslaught on the enemy's works at the foot of Missionary Ridge. These works were captured in a bayonet struggle full of grim determination and enthusiasm. Then the troops "press gallantly on up the ridge in full view of both armies, with deafening cheers, heedless of the deadly fire belched into their very faces, and overrun the works at the summit like a torrent, capturing thirty-five guns, and prisoners wholesale."

Sherman was delighted at the outcome of the battle, and none the less so because Grant was entitled to the credit of its management. "It was magnificent," he afterward said, "in its conception, in its execution, and in its glorious results; hastened somewhat by the supposed danger of Burnside, at Knoxville, yet so completely successful, that nothing is left for cavil or fault-finding."

It should be noted that General "Phil" Sheridan, whom Sherman always admired, played a conspicuous part in the battle of Missionary Ridge. These two soldiers, however, were destined not to see much more of each other during the war. Sheridan was soon to be assigned to cavalry work in Virginia.

Sherman had little time for exultation. On the evening of the battle General Grant wrote him: "No doubt you witnessed the handsome manner in which Thomas's troops carried Missionary Ridge this afternoon, and can feel a just pride, too, in the part taken by the forces under your command in taking first so much of the same range of hills, and then in

attracting the attention of so many of the enemy as to make Thomas's part certain of success. The next thing now will be to relieve Burnside. I have heard from him to the evening of the 23d. At that time he had from ten to twelve days' supplies, and spoke hopefully of holding out that length of time."

Without detailing the movement of troops necessitated by the retreat of Bragg's army, or the besieging of Burnside at Knoxville by Longstreet, we can simply chronicle that when Sherman, in response to urgent orders, rode into that city on the morning of December 6th, he found that General Longstreet had raised the siege, and started in retreat up the valley, toward Virginia. He was rather pleasantly surprised by the comfortable appearance of things within the place, and particularly by the elaborate dinner, including roast turkey, to which Burnside treated him and the members of his staff. "Why, I thought you were starving," he remarked, interrogatively.

Burnside explained that at no time had Knoxville been "completely invested," and that he had been able to keep open his communications with the country on the south side of the River Holston (on which Knoxville is situated), "more especially with the French Broad settlements, from whose Union inhabitants he had received a good supply of beef, bacon and corn meal."

"Had I known of this," observes Sherman in his "Memoirs," "I should not have hurried my men so fast; but until I reached Knoxville I thought our

troops there were actually in danger of starvation." Having now supplied Burnside with such troops as he needed (the corps of General Granger) Sherman, with his other forces, began a leisurely return to Chattanooga. After reaching there on December 16th, and making certain dispositions and changes in his command, the Department of the Tennessee, he took a hasty trip to Lancaster, O., where he had the unusual experience of spending Christmas at home with his family.

To his brother John, who was then in Washington, Sherman wrote an interesting note, showing that he was by no means puffed up over the increased fame which his exploits at the battle of Chattanooga had given him, and that he knew a general's reputation is never safe until a war is actually ended. "I have been importuned from many quarters for my likeness, autographs, and biographies. I have managed to fend off all parties, and hope to do so till the end of the war. I don't want to rise or be notorious, for the reason that a mere slip or accident may let me fall, and I don't care about falling so far as most of the temporary heroes of the war. The real men of the war will be determined by the closing scenes, and then the army will determine the questions. Newspaper puffs and self-written biographies will then be ridiculous caricatures."

But Sherman, whether he would or not, was now a full-fledged war hero, nor is it likely that the odor of incense was altogether ungrateful to him. One

must indeed be a stoic to turn away altogether from the delights of sincere praise. And then how completely did all this dissipate that once exasperating rumor of "insanity" and "nervous breakdown"!

One tribute greatly pleased Sherman. That was a joint resolution of Congress, passed a little later (February 19, 1864), tendering the thanks of that body—which was not always so complimentary concerning war matters—to the general and the officers and men who served under him, "for their gallant and arduous services in marching to the relief of the Army of the Cumberland, and for their gallantry and heroism in the battle of Chattanooga, which contributed in a great degree to the success of our arms in that glorious victory."

Sherman, little as he knew it, had only begun to taste the rewards of fame. Greater work than ever was in store for him. In the meantime he returned south from Ohio, about New Year's of 1864, and achieved an incidental *tour de force* by capturing Meridian, in eastern Mississippi, destroying the railroads which centred there, and doing as much mischief as possible, in view of such Union campaigning as was to follow. This movement, or raid, was accomplished in February, and was a forerunner of mighty military events in the more southern department of the conflict.

Before closing the chapter, and proceeding to a discussion of the Atlanta campaign, let us recall two letters which now form part of history, but which, when written, were quite spontaneous, and marked

"confidential." One was a letter from Grant (dated March 4, 1864), announcing that he had been nominated to fill the revived grade of lieutenant-general of the army, and generously thanking Sherman for previous assistance and co-operation. "What I want," says Grant, "is to express my thanks to you and McPherson, as *the men* to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success."

In view of future events, and because of its characteristic vein of frankness, Sherman's reply is worth quoting in part:

"*Dear General:*—I have your more than kind and characteristic letter of the 4th, and will send a copy of it to General McPherson at once. You do yourself injustice and us too much honor in assigning to us so large a share of the merits which have led to your high advancement. . . .

"You are now Washington's legitimate successor, and occupy a position of almost dangerous elevation; but if you can continue, as heretofore, to be yourself, simple, honest, and unpretending, you will enjoy through life the respect and love of friends, and the homage of millions of human beings who will award to you a large share for securing to them and their descendants a government of law and stability. [1]

. . . . . .

"My only points of doubt were as to your knowledge of grand strategy, and of books of science and

[1] In this sentence one may easily fancy a warning to Grant not to yield, when the war was over, to the blandishments of political office. But in this respect Grant was destined to lack the wisdom of his great colleague.

history; but I confess your common sense seems to have supplied all this.

"Now as to the future. Do not stay in Washington. Halleck is better qualified than you are to stand the buffets of intrigue and policy. Come out west; take to yourself the whole Mississippi Valley; let us make it dead-sure, and I tell you the Atlantic slope and Pacific shores will follow its destiny as sure as the limbs of a tree live or die with the main trunk! We have done much; still much remains to be done. Time and time's influences are all with us; we could almost afford to sit still and let these influences work. Even in the seceded states your word *now* would go further than a President's proclamation, or an act of Congress.

"For God's sake, and for your country's sake, come out of Washington! I foretold to General Halleck, before he left Corinth, the inevitable result to him, and I now exhort you to come out west. Here lies the seat of the coming empire; and from the west, when our task is done, we will make short work of Charleston and Richmond, and the impoverished coast of the Atlantic.

"Your sincere friend,

"W. T. SHERMAN."

Fortunately for himself and his country Grant had the good sense to "come out of Washington" and, with the aid of Sherman, now set about the mighty task of ending the war.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

"Bring the good old bugle, boys! we'll sing another song,
Sing it with a spirit that will move the world along—
Sing it as we used to sing it, fifty thousand strong,
While we were marching through Georgia!

"'Hurrah! Hurrah! We bring the jubilee!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!'
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"How the darkies shouted when they heard the joyful sound!
How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found!
How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground,
When we were marching through Georgia!"

This war classic, wherein cheap doggerel was joined to one of the most inspiring military tunes ever written, and which once thrilled the hearts of thousands and thousands of people, is now but an echo of Sherman's greatest movement, the beginning of which is to be found in what is known as the Atlanta Campaign.

To explain the object of this campaign let us begin with the fact that on the 12th of March, 1864, Lieutenant-General Grant was placed in command of all the armies of the United States. A few days

later, at Nashville, Sherman assumed command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, in place of Grant; General McPherson succeeded to the command of the Army of the Tennessee; and John A. Logan was placed at the head of McPherson's corps. The Military Division of the Mississippi had embraced the Armies of the Cumberland, Tennessee, Ohio and Arkansas. Subsequently the Army of the Arkansas was transferred to the Military Division of the Gulf, under General Canby, and after that transfer Sherman got his own Division of the Mississippi organized about as follows:

| | *Men* |
|---|---|
| Army of the Cumberland (General Thomas) . . . . | 60,700 |
| Army of the Tennessee (General McPherson) . . . | 24,400 |
| Army of the Ohio (General Schofield). . . . . | 13,500 |
| Total . . . . . | 98,600 |

When Grant took command of all the armies, wisely resolving to keep the field, and not to stay among the politicians in Washington, he thus summed up the military situation: The United States held the Mississippi River all the way to its mouth, and the line of the Arkansas, thus possessing all of the northwest above the latter river. The Union also controlled several points in Louisiana; the mouth of the Rio Grande; that part of the country east of the Mississippi which was north of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, as far east as Chattanooga; thence along the line of the rivers Tennessee and Holston, comprising most of the

state of Tennessee; also West Virginia and old Virginia north of the Rapidan and east of the Blue Ridge; together with various points on the Atlantic seaboard, including Fortress Monroe, Norfolk, Beaufort, New Berne, Port Royal, Saint Augustine, Key West and Pensacola. "The balance of the Southern territory, an empire in extent, was still in the hands of the enemy."

In the east, as Grant relates in his "Memoirs," the opposing forces "stood in substantially the same relations toward each other as three years before, or when the war began; they were both between the Federal and Confederate capitals. It is true, footholds had been secured by us on the seacoast, in Virginia and North Carolina, but beyond that, no substantial advantage had been gained by either side." That portion of the Army of the Potomac not guarding lines of communication was on the north bank of the Rapidan; on the opposite bank, strongly entrenched, was the obstinate Lee, with his faithful Army of Northern Virginia acting as a watchdog against all who would invade the sacred precincts of Richmond—where Jefferson Davis still hoped that he would save the Confederacy by virtue of his "military genius."

The Union armies at this time were divided into nineteen departments while the Army of the Potomac was an entirely separate command, without limit as to operating territory. Heretofore these various armies had acted independently of one another, not always with the best results. "I deter-

mined to stop this," says General Grant. "To this end I regarded the Army of the Potomac as the centre, and all west of Memphis along the line described as our position at the time, and north of it, the right wing; the Army of the James, under General Butler, as the left wing, and all the troops south, as a force in the rear of the enemy.[1] . . . My general plan now was to concentrate all the force possible against the Confederate armies in the field." There were two such, east of the Mississippi River, and facing north—Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, on the south bank of the Rapidan, and the army under Joseph E. Johnston, at Dalton, Georgia, opposed to Sherman, who by this time was removing his headquarters to Chattanooga.

Furthermore, the Confederates were obliged to guard the Shenandoah Valley, "a great storehouse from which to feed their armies," and also their lines of communication from their capital, Richmond, to Tennessee. Forrest, the dashing cavalry general, was also operating in the west, making things unpleasant for the Union forces in the Tennessee district.

"Accordingly I arranged for a simultaneous movement all along the line," Grant continues. "Sherman was to move from Chattanooga, Johnston's army and Atlanta being his objective points." Then follows an outline of the proposed movement

[1] Toward the close of the year, 1863, General Butler was placed in command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, and his force was afterward designated as the Army of the James.

of the other armies, with the explanation: "They were acting as a unit so far as such a thing was possible over such a vast field. Lee, with the capital of the Confederacy, was the main end to which all were working. Johnston, with Atlanta, was an important obstacle in the way of our accomplishing the result aimed at, and was therefore almost an independent objective." And Grant had written to Sherman, apropos of this grand campaign: "You I propose to move against Johnston's army, to break it up, and to get into the interior of the enemy's country as far as you can, inflicting all the damage you can against their war resources." To Sherman himself the lieutenant-general left the actual plan of the Atlanta campaign, and on Sherman, therefore, in the end, devolved all the greater honor. In brief, Grant's comprehensive scheme was to make a general advance of all the armies during the first week in May. He was to move on Richmond, via Lee, while Sherman would attend to Johnston and Atlanta.

We will leave Grant, with his sending off of supporting expeditions, his preliminary set-back in the campaign, when he tried the "hammering" process, the failure of the Banks expedition on the Red River, the retreat of Sigel, the slaughter in the Wilderness, and other discouragements, and turn to the movement against Atlanta. The picture is a less sombre one, although full of battle atmosphere.

Twelve hours after Grant had crossed the Rapidan

(May 4th) Sherman began the movement of his three armies, the Cumberland, the Ohio, and the Tennessee, toward the intended goal. He had with him nearly a hundred thousand men (exclusive of some uncompleted divisions of cavalry) and 254 guns. His personal escort comprised his staff, half a dozen wagons, a company of sharpshooters and a small band of irregular cavalry. The general's camp equipment, although hardly placed upon the famous "nightshirt and toothbrush" basis of simplicity, was made as unluxurious as possible. "I wanted," says Sherman, "to set the example, and gradually to convert all parts of that army into a mobile machine, willing and able to start at a minute's notice, and to subsist on the scantiest food. To reap absolute success might involve the necessity even of dropping all wagons, and to subsist on the chance food which the country was known to contain."

Sherman had accumulated an abundance of supplies, sufficient to warrant a movement south before leaving Chattanooga; but he was determined to take no chances, and to be ready for the worst. The wagons allotted to each brigade were restricted to the carrying of food, ammunition and absolutely necessary clothing. Wall-tents were forbidden, save for the sick and wounded, but "tent-flies," without poles, were allowed. Thomas, unlike the other generals, had a conventional "head quarters-camp" over which Sherman frequently joked him, as well as a big wagon that could

be converted into an office, which the men used to call "Thomas's Circus." Sherman tells us that several times during the campaign he found quartermasters hid away in some comfortable nook at the rear, with tents and mess-fixtures, which "were the envy of the passing soldiers"; and he frequently broke them up, and sent the tents to the surgeons of brigades. "I doubt," he says, "if any army ever went forth to battle with fewer *impedimenta*, and, where the regular and necessary supplies of food, ammunition, and clothing were issued, as called for, so regularly and so well."

Nor must we forget that one of the great features of the march proved to be the fact that Sherman, advancing through a hostile country, was able to keep open his line of railroad communication to the north. It was a difficult undertaking; tracks must often be relaid, and bridges rebuilt, not to mention the dangers of a purely military kind. The problem of securing a sufficient number of cars had already given him much trouble, but he had been equal to the situation.

Against Sherman, General Johnston had at first some 43,000 effectives, and this number was shortly to be increased during May, by the addition of 22,000 men. The Southern army, being upon the defensive and operating on interior lines was, by all rules of war, equal to its assailant. "This ratio was substantially maintained during the campaign ending with the fall of Atlanta; hence it will be

seen that the Federals had no material advantage over the enemy." [1]

Johnston, who was well entrenched in front of Dalton, about forty miles southeast of Chattanooga, had been strongly urged by Jefferson Davis since the preceding December to assume an aggressive winter campaign. This plan, favored by Lee, had provided, among other things, for the turning of Thomas's position at Chattanooga by a move to the eastward of it and a junction with Longstreet for a dash into middle Tennessee. Johnston, who was undoubtedly stronger in defensive than offensive tactics, did not approve of the plan, and after considerable correspondence (which did not serve to decrease the strained relations known to exist between Davis and himself) the matter ended in his being at Dalton when Sherman began his advance. The Confederate general, however, sent an officer to Richmond for the purpose of explaining to Mr. Davis that he had not declined to assume the offensive, as was charged, but, on the contrary, was eager to move forward whenever the relative forces of the opposing armies should justify him in such a measure. This emissary was to illustrate (so Johnston himself tells us) the difference between his plan of operations and that advocated by the Confederate government; "and in that connection to explain that I had been actively engaged in preparations to take the field—those over which I had con-

[1] "Marching Through Georgia," p. 85. Hedley estimates that Johnston's army finally aggregated 70,000 effectives.

trol being in a satisfactory state of forwardness. But that in the important element of field transportation . . . which I had neither means nor authority to collect, nothing had been done, while steps to collect the large number of artillery horses necessary had just been taken ; and that the surest means of enabling us to go forward was to send the proposed reinforcements to Dalton at once ; then, hould the enemy take the initiative, as was almost certain, we might defeat him on this side of the Tennessee, where the consequences of defeat would be so much more disastrous to the enemy and less so to us, than if the battle were fought north of that river." [1]

There is no need to enter into the rights and wrongs of this controversy, although the first impulse always is to side with Johnston, rather than with Davis, who was not the Napoleon that he was prone to consider himself. "On several occasions during the war," wrote General Grant, satirically, "Mr. Davis came to the relief of the Union army by means of his *superior military genius.*" It is sufficient for our purpose to know that General Johnston was still at Dalton early in May.

Sherman began to push forward for that place. The direct route there was impracticable, and lay

[1] See Johnston's "Narrative of Military Operations, Directed During the Late War Between the States." In his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Jefferson Davis writes: "To enable General Johnston to repulse the hostile advance and assume the offensive, no effort was spared on the part of the government" (Vol. II, p. 551).

through the pass of Buzzard's Roost, issuing through Rocky Face, a spur of the Alleghany Mountains. The Army of the Cumberland, under Thomas, occupied the northern end of this pass, aided by the Twenty-third Corps under Schofield; while McPherson, with the Army of the Tennessee, entered upon a series of flanking movements. These movements brought him in front of Resaca (fifteen miles to the south of Dalton), then occupied by a small brigade of Johnston's forces (May 9th). The enemy seemed so well entrenched, here, however, that McPherson fell back three miles to the mouth of Snake Creek Gap. Sherman afterward declared that his general had not done the full measure of his work, and might have "walked into" Resaca. "Had he done so, I am certain that Johnston would not have ventured to attack him in position, but would have retreated eastward by Spring Place, and we should have captured half his army and all his artillery and wagons at the very beginning of the campaign. Such an opportunity does not occur twice in a single life, but at the critical moment McPherson seems to have been a little timid. Still, he was perfectly justified by his orders."

The failure of McPherson's movement—which thus brought forth the only adverse criticism Sherman ever made of this fine officer—caused a change of plans. Sherman concentrated his forces and advanced against Resaca, where Johnston, having suddenly abandoned his admirable

defenses at Dalton, had strongly entrenched himself with the major part of his force. The rival armies now faced each other, and in the battling and skirmishing which followed, McPherson, as if anxious to make amends for being "a little timid," played a gallant part. On the 15th, the Union troops obstinately pressed around the town from all points, while "the sound of cannon and musketry rose all day to the dignity of a battle." Late in the afternoon McPherson got his line of battle forward to a ridge overlooking Resaca, from which his field artillery commanded a railroad bridge across the Oostenaula River, running past the town. The Confederates made several brave sallies in their attempt to drive him away from this place of vantage, but were each time repulsed with heavy loss.

Johnston, seeing that his lines of communication were threatened and that further occupation of Resaca would put his army in peril, quickly got his men out of the place that night and retreated across the Oostenaula, burning his bridges behind him. He was a great defensive general, but already Sherman was threatening to beat him on his own ground. As a military expert has pointed out, Sherman's tactics during this great campaign, though varied, of course, in the matter of detail, uniformly consisted in forcing the centre of his army upon Johnston's lines, while with the right and left he operated upon either flank as chance or ground best offered.

The abandonment of Dalton and Resaca was sharply criticised at Richmond, and did not tend to

increase President Davis's love for Johnston. But the latter has well explained in his "Narrative of Military Operations," that he was compelled to evacuate Dalton "by the march of the Federal army itself toward Resaca—that march being completely covered by the mountain, Rocky Face. And at Resaca, after intrenching his army so strongly as to make it secure from assault, General Sherman availed himself of the course of the Oostenaula, almost parallel to our railroad, to extend his line, protected by it, to the neighborhood of Calhoun, which compelled us to pass to the rear of that point, to avoid being cut off from Atlanta."

It is idle to speculate as to what some other Southern general, Lee, for instance, might have done had he been in Johnston's place. A genius might have entrapped Sherman, far away in the enemy's country, into the surrender of his whole army. Johnston was not a genius. He failed, however, in a masterly way. "It was the cleanest and best-conducted retreat that we had seen or read of," [1] wrote General Hooker, who served as one of Sherman's corps commanders. Quite aside from the grievances which Johnston had against the Confederate government, it is fair to say, however, that he was completely outgeneraled by his great antagonist.

We have some curious side-lights on the history of this campaign from Captain David P. Conyng-

[1] The quotation is taken from a very interesting letter, in praise of Johnston, which Hooker wrote to General Lovell, dated October 21, 1873.

ham, who served through it as a volunteer aide-de-camp and also as a correspondent of the New York *Herald*. Conyngham was no hero-worshiper, but he had a great admiration for the military powers of General Sherman, as he shows in his series of entertaining pen-pictures entitled "Sherman's March Through the South," published several months after the close of the war. The glimpses of Sherman himself which he gives us seem lifelike portraits, because they have the real human touch, devoid of fustian and "spread-eagleism." Here is a description of a scene which occurred while the invading army was in front of the Rocky Face Mountain. The different corps and division commanders had their headquarters contiguous to their commands. Major-General Howard, in charge of the Fourth Corps, had his unassuming quarters under fire of the Confederates' long-range guns. "Several shots fell quite near, creating some commotion in the camp, but without disturbing Howard in the least." One day, Sherman called at Howard's quarters, only to be received, as he sat down to wait for the general, with the bursting of two of Johnston's shells too near for absolute safety.

Sherman, in his nervous, fidgetty way, was walking about when he saw Howard riding toward him. As the latter reined up at headquarters he cried: "I say, Howard, do you know, but you are the politest man in the army?"

"Indeed, I wasn't aware of that, general," observed Howard.

"Well, it's true! Here I am, in your absence, and though you were not here to receive me, I have got the warmest reception I have experienced for a long time."

"Why, general, you need not thank me for it, but General Johnston," answered Howard; "his compliments were so overpowering that one of them came near killing me," and he pointed to his pantaloons, torn by a bullet.

General Thomas's headquarters, so Conyngham tells us, comprised a "gorgeous outlay of tents of all kinds." Every officer had a tent, "almost every servant had a tent, while the adjutant-general's was a sort of open rebellion against all restrictory orders." Sherman, on the contrary, "had but one old wall tent, and some three or four 'flies' for his quarters." He "could never let slip an opportunity to pass a joke at Thomas's expense," and would frequently rein up his horse in front of the latter's tent, and ask, in apparent ignorance, "Whose quarters are these?"

"General Thomas's, general," would be the quick reply.

"Oh, yes; Thomastown; Thomasville; a very pretty place, indeed; it appears to be growing rapidly"—and Sherman would ride away, chuckling at his own humor.

After McPherson fell back from Resaca, we have a picture of Sherman as he rode up the valley to the front. "He was anxious and nervous, as was evident from the fierce manner in which he pulled

at his unlit cigar, and twitched that strange, coarse face of his." His ride through the lines created no enthusiasm; his old corps, the Fifteenth, alone brightened up when they saw "Uncle Billy," as they fondly called him. "Sherman was, at all times, too cold and undemonstrative for the men to love him. They had unbounded confidence in him and believed whatever he did was right, and that was all. McPherson by his noble bearing and dashing appearance, Hooker by his fine martial presence and princely air, Logan by his dashing, kind manner, might create enthusiasm among troops, but Sherman, or Thomas, never!"

The night before, Sherman had remained up a long time, maturing the plans for his operations against Resaca. The next morning, feeling very tired, he sat on a log, under the shade of a tree, and soon tumbled off on the ground, fast asleep. The soldiers went marching by the prostrate commander, whom few of them recognized.

"Is that a general?" asked one of the men, in amazement, of the single orderly who stood near Sherman.

"Yes," was the response.

"It's a pretty way we are commanded, when our generals are lying drunk on the road," exclaimed the soldier, as he walked away in disgust.

Sherman suddenly leaped to his feet. "Stop, my man," he said—for he had evidently been sleeping with one ear open—"stop, my man! I am not drunk. While you were sleeping last

night I was planning for you, sir, and now I was taking a nap. General Sherman never gets drunk!"

The soldier was only too glad to slink away.

Another writer, Colonel (then Major) George Ward Nichols, who was one of Sherman's aides-de-camp, has emphasized the combination of bravery and simplicity which so many observed in Sherman during his campaign. "When sounds of musketry or cannonading reach his ears the general is extremely restless until he has been satisfied as to the origin, location, and probable results of the fight in progress. At such moments he usually lights a fresh cigar, and smokes while walking to and fro, stopping now and then to listen to the increasing rattle of musketry; then, muttering, 'Forward!' will mount 'Old Sam,' a horribly fast walking horse, which is as indifferent to shot and shell as his master, and starts off in the direction of the fire. Dismounting near the battle line, he will stride away into the woods, or to the edge of a creek or swamp, until some officer, fearful of the consequences, respectfully warns him that he is in a dangerous position, when, perhaps, he retires." [1]

During this campaign we get another glimpse, a serio-comic one, of Sherman's contempt for danger. One afternoon he paid a visit to General Hooker, who had pitched his headquarters in a place so admirably exposed to the fire of the enemy that one might have thought he was seeking

[1] Nichols, "The Story of the Great March, from the Diary of a Staff Officer."

destruction. The two generals seated themselves placidly, "with their feet against the trees, watching the operations immediately in front of them." What is more, they were in full view of the Confederates. Very soon a shell shrieked right over their heads, making the crockery on the dinner-table rattle like mad, and nearly frightening to death the negro cook, Sambo—who later excused himself on the ground that a fellow darky had been killed the night before by "one o' dem tings." Another shell quickly followed, demolishing a chair recently vacated by an officer, and all the time rifle-bullets went "singing and fizzing" about merrily, as they crashed through the leaves and branches of neighboring trees. The staff-officers of the respective generals did not find this leaden rain very amusing, nor was their cheerfulness increased by the whistling of a new shell—but they could not move while Sherman and Hooker sat calmly in the open, discussing military questions with as much nonchalance as if they were dining at Delmonico's, in New York. It must have been hard to appear at ease under such trying circumstances, but the staff officers could not do less than imitate, if they could not feel, the indifference of the two chiefs. At last the sun went down, whereupon Sherman condescended to take leave of General Hooker, much to the relief of every one. [1]

[1] General Sherman asserts that he never needlessly goes under fire, and that he calculates all the chances, avoiding useless ex-

"The general's habits of life," further writes Colonel Nichols, of Sherman at this period, "are simple. Primitive, almost as first principles, his greatest sacrifice will be made when he resigns campaigning for a more civilized life. He has a keen sense of the beauty of nature, and never is happier than when his camp is pitched in some forest of lofty pines, where the wind sings through the tree-tops in melodious measure, and the feet are buried in the soft carpeting of spindles. He is the last one to complain when the table-fare is reduced to beef and hard-tack, and, in truth, he rather enjoys poverty of food, as one of the conditions of a soldier's life."

After General Johnston had abandoned Resaca and Sherman's troops had marched into the town, the latter began a pursuit of the Confederates, who were now retreating, in admirable order, to the southward. Johnston, when he reached Cassville, entrenched himself and issued orders for a battle. But there was some friction, or difference of opinion, between him and several of his officers, and he withdrew from the place, to continue the retreat. Johnston tells us that two of his commanders, Generals Hood and Polk, urged him, for military reasons, to abandon the ground at once, and cross the Etowah River, to the south. "Although the position was the best we had occupied," he says, "I yielded at last, in the belief that the

posure, which is undoubtedly true. *Mais*, as the French say.—"Story of the Great March."

confidence of the commanders of two of the three corps of the army, of their inability to resist the enemy, would inevitably be communicated to their troops, and produce that inability."

This conference afterward gave rise to a particularly acid controversy, and none the less so because the South, wincing as it was from the evacuation of Dalton and Resaca, had expected Johnston to do something brilliant and aggressive at Cassville. Five years after the war General Hood gave his own version of the affair to Sherman. He said he had argued with Johnston against fighting the battle "purely on the defensive," but had asked the general to "permit him, with his own corps and part of Polk's, to quit their lines, and march rapidly to attack and overwhelm Schofield, who was known to be separated from Thomas by an interval of nearly five miles, claiming that he could have defeated Schofield, and got back to his position in time to meet General Thomas's attack in front." He had contended, he added, for the "offensive-defensive game," instead of the "pure defensive," as proposed by General Johnston; and it "was at this time that General Johnston had taken offense, and for this reason had ordered the retreat." [1]

It would be idle to attempt to settle the merits of this controversy, which will doubtless have advocates on either side a century from now. Sherman entered Cassville on the morning of May 20th, and

[1] See Sherman's "Memoirs," Vol. II, p. 41.

found there many signs of preparation for a grand battle, among them a line of fresh entrenchments on a hill beyond the town, extending nearly three miles to the south. Whereupon there was more gloom in Richmond, and more unkind thinking by Mr. Davis and his advisers. But Johnston still had warm friends who said, with a knowing air: "The general is a great strategist. Wait a little while, and you will see—what you will see! He is quietly, skilfully drawing Sherman farther and farther into a trap, farther and farther away from Northern aid, and in due season you will see Johnston turn, like a wary tiger, and crush the Union army!"

On the very day that General Sherman's forces occupied Cassville, he wrote from Kingston, near by, to his brother John: "I now have full possession of all the rich country of the Etowah. We occupy Rome, Kingston and Cassville. I have repaired the railroad [torn up by the enemy] to these points, and now have ordered the essential supplies forward to replenish our wagons, when I will make for Atlanta, fifty-nine miles from here, and about fifty from the advance. Johnston has halted across the Etowah at a place called Allatoona, where the railroad and common road pass through a spur of the mountain, making one of those formidable passes which gives an army on the defensive so much advantage, but I propose to cross the Etowah here, and to go for Marietta via Dallas (Ga.). Look at

your map, and you will see the move.[1] . . . Put forth the whole strength of the nation now, and if we can't whip the South we must bow our necks in patient submission. Grant surely is fighting hard enough, and I think this army will make its mark."

A little later Sherman writes, illustrative of the difficulties which Nature is putting in his way, as if she were in league with the Southland: "My long and single line of railroad to my rear, of limited capacity, is the delicate point of my game, as also the fact that all of Georgia, except the cleared bottoms, is densely wooded, with few roads, and at any point an enterprising enemy can, in a few hours with axes and spades, make across our path formidable works, whilst his sharpshooters, spies, and scouts, in the guise of peaceable farmers, can hang around us and kill our wagonmen, messengers and couriers. *It is a big Indian war.*"

There is no doubt that as Sherman continued the pursuit from Cassville he was severely hampered, although not fatally so, by the roughness of the country. Before reaching Rome, as we learn from the graphic narrative in "Marching Through Georgia," much of the route was terribly mountainous and hard to traverse. Sand Mountain, in reality a succession of mountains of no great altitude, but very steep, proved particularly dangerous. In the sides of these huge hills a road had

[1] The Etowah is a river of Georgia which rises in Lumpkin County and, after a course of about 150 miles, finally unites with the Oostenaula River, at Rome, to form the Coosa.

been cut, so narrow that only one team could creep cautiously along it. "A sudden pitch sidewise, or a rough jolt against one of the many huge boulders which lay in the roadway, was sufficient to upset a wagon and send it tearing down the mountainside, end over end." Several such accidents did happen, but the teamsters had the presence of mind to leap from their saddles and seek safety before the crash came.

Of course the passage of the wagons put a great deal of unpleasant work upon the soldiers, and we are told that it was by no means unusual to see a squad of men "bolstering up a wagon, in order to keep the centre of gravity within the limit of safety."

During a portion of the journey rain fell incessantly, soaking soldiers and officers to the skin. Then, just before the Coosa River was reached, the sun again shone on the bedraggled troops and dried their clothes upon their bodies. When they got to the river, already greatly swollen and rising rapidly, they were ordered to ford the stream. "Being averse to again marching in water-soaked clothing, they removed their shoes, socks and trousers, and strapped them upon their knapsacks; then, tucking their shirts under their arms, plunged in, dressing themselves on gaining the farther shore." Under hardships like these did Sherman and his army resolutely follow Joe Johnston. By the end of May, through hard work and fighting, too, Sherman had contrived to drive the enemy from the strong positions of Dalton, Resaca, Cassville, Alla-

toona and Dallas; had advanced his lines from Chattanooga nearly a hundred miles through "as difficult country as was ever fought over by civilized armies"; and stood eager to go on as soon as the railroad communications to bring forward the necessary supplies were completed. The fighting had been continuous. Sherman's casualties for May, killed, wounded and missing, comprised nearly 10,000 men. The troops had been under fire for the greater part of the whole month, owing not only to several actual engagements, but also to the skirmishing and the clever "sharpshooting" of the enemy.

The month had been quite long enough to exhibit the powers of the two opposing generals in this strange duel which, in its peculiar details, has no exact parallel in the annals of war. Sherman had shown wonderful energy and resourcefulness in pushing back Johnston; while it must be admitted that the latter, though outgeneraled, and perhaps lacking in initiative, retreated with skill. He was going to defeat at least gracefully. Sherman was always trying to force him to an open field engagement, while the Confederate, rightly or wrongly, placidly declined. "This campaign," observes Colonel Dodge, "resembles a bout with the foils. Both fencers are on guard. Sherman is constantly at play with his weapon, disengaging, cutting over, beating, lunging, using every art to draw into action his antagonist. Johnston warily follows every disengagement, skilfully parries each lunge his

stronger-armed adversary makes, with an occasional cautious *riposte*, which in turn is invariably countered."

In short, Johnston was pursuing the "Fabian" policy which another Southerner, Washington, had adopted with such success in the war of the Revolution. But the Confederate was not a Washington, and conditions were different, while the new Fabius was not fortunate enough to be opposed by wool-gathering English generals.

The month of June saw the continuance of this duel, as the two principals and their troops moved cautiously toward Atlanta. The North and the South alike awaited with breathless interest the result, which few could intelligently predict. For the South, everything now depended on the success or the failure of two armies; Lee's, in Virginia, and Johnston's retreating columns. Sherman knew, too, how anxiously Grant and Lincoln, and the loyal people far away, looked to him for success, and he went on, farther and farther, into a dangerous, hostile country, quite cheerfully, as if he were not incurring a terrible responsibility.

A weak man would have gone insane under such a burden. But Sherman showed no change of demeanor, unless he seemed a bit more nervous than usual, and was so much himself, indeed, that he continued to abuse his old enemies, the politicians, and the unfortunate newspaper correspondents. He gave the latter a blast when he issued the following order:

"Inasmuch as an impression is afloat, that the commanding general has prohibited the mails to and from the army, he takes this method of assuring all officers and men, on the contrary, that he encourages them by his influence and authority to keep up the most unreserved correspondence with their families and friends. . . . What the commanding general does discourage is the existence of that class of men who will not take up a musket and fight, but who follow our army to pick up news for sale, and who are more used to bolster up idle and worthless officers, than to notice the hard-working and meritorious, whose modesty is equal to their courage, and who scorn to seek the flattery of the press."

The contemptuous allusion to the correspondents as men who "pick up news for sale," was hardly just, and the whole order lacked dignity ; but it was characteristic of Sherman's dislike in one quarter. Furthermore, it acted as a safety-valve for the general's wrath. Captain George W. Pepper, who quotes the order in his fragmentary but spirited account of the campaign, adds that Sherman "had a righteous horror for a set of itinerant, flattering, spongy sycophants, who made it their business to inflate brainless staff-officers, while the field and line officers, with the brave rank and file, are seldom heard of outside of their commands."[1]

Meanwhile we find that General Johnston, after

[1] Pepper, "Personal Recollections of Sherman's Campaigns in Georgia and the Carolinas."

more traveling, has retired to a position between Lost, Pine and Brush Mountains, a short distance from Marietta. Then, by a clever flanking movement, Sherman reëstablishes his line along the railroad, and secures a new base of supplies (June 10th). Later in the month he is assaulting the enemy at Kenesaw Mountain, just northwest of Marietta, but the result is not successful. We need not follow the remainder of the march in detail. It is more to the point to say that by the 20th of July Sherman's forces were getting in position around Atlanta, into which Johnston's army had retreated.

But it was Johnston's army no longer. As he had moved to the southward the discontent with him had grown stronger and stronger in Richmond. He was relieved of command, and General John B. Hood took his place on the 18th of July. Hood was known as a "fighter," aggressive and enterprising; much was expected of him. In justifying his removal of Johnston, Jefferson Davis says, in his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government":

"When it became known that the Army of Tennessee had been successively driven from one strong position to another, until finally it had reached the earthworks constructed for the exterior defense of Atlanta, the popular disappointment was extreme. The possible fall of the 'Gate City,' with its important railroad communications, vast stores, factories for the manufacture of all sorts of military supplies, rolling mills and foundries, was now con-

templated for the first time at its full value, and produced intense anxiety far and wide. From many quarters, including such as had most urged his assignment, came delegations, petitions and letters, urging me to remove General Johnston from the command of the army, and assign that important trust to some officer who would resolutely hold and defend Atlanta. . . . Yet I did not [at first] respond to the wishes of those who came in hottest haste for the removal of General Johnston; for here again, more fully than many others, I realized how serious it was to change commanders in the presence of the enemy. . . . I was so fully aware of the danger of changing commanders of an army while actively engaged with the enemy, that I only overcame the objection in view of an emergency, and in the hope that the impending danger of the loss of Atlanta might be averted."

On the 17th, after Johnston had heard a report that the whole Union army had crossed the Chattahoochee River, above Atlanta, and while he was giving instructions to one of his officers regarding the defense of the city, he received a telegram from General Cooper. "I am directed by the secretary of war," it ran, "to inform you that, as you have failed to arrest the advance of the enemy to the vicinity of Atlanta, far in the interior of Georgia, and express no confidence that you can defeat or expel him, you are hereby relieved of the command of the Army and Department of Tennessee," etc.

It must be admitted that Johnston's telegram in

reply, announcing that he had obeyed orders and had turned the command over to General Hood, was not exactly an inspiring defense. "As to the alleged cause of my removal," he telegraphed back, "I assert that Sherman's army is much stronger compared with that of Tennessee, than Grant's compared with that of Northern Virginia. Yet the enemy has been compelled to advance much more slowly to the vicinity of Atlanta, than to that of Richmond and Petersburg; and penetrated much deeper into Virginia than into Georgia."

This excuse, even if a good one, leaves an unpleasant impression on the mind, for it says, in effect, "Although I have had less advantages than Lee, I have proved myself a better general than Lee."

Johnston and his friends felt very bitter over his removal, and many competent military critics consider that Jefferson Davis, in making it, was guilty of a blunder. Among these critics was Grant himself, who says, in his "Memoirs" that he thinks Johnston's tactics were correct. "Anything that could have prolonged the war a year beyond the time that it did finally close, would probably have exhausted the North to such an extent that they might then have abandoned the contest and agreed to a separation. Atlanta was very strongly intrenched."

Although unable to carry them out, Johnston had his own views as to the defense of the city. He looked at the matter from both a political and a

military view-point. From the political view-point he knew that there was arising in the North, among the Democrats, a strong peace party, and he realized that if he could but foil Sherman in his attempt against Atlanta the hands of this party might be strengthened, and the North might be brought to declare the whole war a failure—particularly if Lee could repulse Grant in Virginia. From a military standpoint, he had hoped that General Forrest, with a good force of cavalry, might be thrown into Sherman's rear, thus cutting off the latter's railroad communications and supplies. "Such a result," he reasoned, "would have compelled General Sherman to the desperate resource of a decisive battle on our terms, which involved attacking excellent troops intrenched, or to that of abandoning his enterprise. In the first event the chances of battle would have been greatly in our favor. In the second, a rout of the Federal army could scarcely have been prevented."

From this removal of Johnston resulted the greatest domestic quarrel within the Confederate household. But had he remained in command, could Johnston really have worsted Sherman? We think not.

When Sherman heard of the change of generals, he asked Schofield, who had been one of Hood's classmates at West Point, about the Confederate's character. "Bold even to rashness, and courageous in the extreme," was the decided answer. "The change means *fight!*" said Sherman, as he

sent word to his division commanders to be prepared for battle in any shape. "This is just what we want—to fight in open ground, on anything like equal terms, instead of being forced to run up against prepared entrenchments. But the enemy, having Atlanta behind him, can choose the time and place of attack, and can at pleasure mass a superior force on our weakest point. Therefore, we must be constantly ready!"

Several days later John Sherman was writing to his brother from the North:

"We feel that upon Grant and you, and the armies under your command, the fate of this country depends. If you are successful, it is ardently hoped that peace may soon follow with a restored union. If you fail, the wisest can hope for nothing but a long train of disasters, and the strife of factions. . . . Everybody here dreads the breaking up of the Union as the beginning of anarchy. The very thing they fight for in the South is for them, and for us, the worst calamity. . . . But the anarchy of unsuccessful war will reduce us to a pitiable state, in which we shall easily fall victims to demagogism or tyranny. Every one feels that you have done your part nobly. Grant has not had such success. . . . I congratulate you on the ability and success of your campaign. I see many officers, and they all speak of it not only as a success, but as a scientific success, evincing abilities of a high order."

It was well for the country at large that Sherman

and Grant, despite their incessant smoking, could boast of good nerves. Otherwise they must have collapsed when they realized, as they fully did, how upon them alone depended the future of America.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FALL OF A STRONGHOLD

General Hood now determined to reverse the policy of Johnston, officially under a cloud, and do what the Richmond government had so long been urging of the Army of Tennessee—fight. Johnston went home, with what feelings we may imagine; Jefferson Davis and the South now looked for national salvation to the new commander and to Robert E. Lee.

About the time that Hood assumed command, his forces were strongly posted four miles in front of Atlanta, on the hills forming the south bank of Peach-tree Creek. On the afternoon of the 20th of July, when Sherman's army had closed in toward the city, the Confederates sallied out from their entrenchments and fell against his right centre. The troops thus unexpectedly assailed, including Hooker's corps, had crossed Peach-tree Creek, and were resting at noon when the enemy came pouring out of their trenches and down upon them. It was a terribly exciting scene, as many of the Union soldiers, rising nobly to the occasion, jumped to their feet and, in many instances, began a hand-to-hand conflict with the Confederates. Hood had inaugurated his fighting policy with a vengeance.

For a time the situation for the right centre seemed to be critical; but General Thomas brought some field batteries into position, on the north side of Peach-tree Creek, from which he directed a furious fire upon the enemy. The Confederates fought magnificently for two hours, but they finally gave up the contest, and retired in good order to their works, leaving upon the ground four hundred dead and several thousand wounded. "We had met successfully a bold sally," Sherman records, "had repelled it handsomely, and were also put on our guard; and the event illustrated the future tactics of our enemy. This sally came from the Peach-tree line, which General Johnston had carefully prepared in advance, from which to fight us *outside* of Atlanta. We then advanced our lines in compact order, close up to these finished intrenchments, overlapping them on our left. From various parts of our lines the houses inside of Atlanta were plainly visible, though between us were the strong parapets, with ditch, *fraise*, *chevaux-de-frise*, and abatis, prepared long in advance by Colonel Jeremy F. Gilmer, formerly of the United States Engineers."

It was discovered by Sherman on the morning of the 22d that during the previous night, the Confederates had fallen back from the line of Peach-tree Creek, to the front of Schofield and Thomas, and had retreated to a strong line of redoubts forming the immediate defenses of Atlanta and covering all the approaches to the city. For some minutes the

surprised general supposed that Hood intended to evacuate Atlanta. But when he rode at the head of the troops under the command of Schofield who had advanced to some open ground in front of a building known as the Howard House, he could see the Confederate main line strongly manned, with guns in position at intervals. Schofield was dressing forward his lines when General McPherson and his staff came up. McPherson and Sherman rode back to the Howard House, where they discussed the methods of Hood, who, by the way, had been a fellow-student at West Point with McPherson. "We ought to be unusually cautious, and prepared at all times for hard fighting," said Sherman, and his companion gave this sentiment unstinted approval.

McPherson then began to discuss some movements which he proposed to make, and which his superior sanctioned. He was in high spirits as he explained his plans, and with his striking face, fine height and bearing, and becoming major-general's uniform, looked as handsome an officer as one could expect to find in the whole country, North or South. The two men now walked down the road a short distance, when they heard firing that neither could explain. "What can it mean?" asked Sherman. "I'll hurry down my line and send you back word," answered McPherson, as he called for his horse and summoned his staff. He quickly gathered together his papers, placed them in a wallet which he thrust into his breast-pocket,

jumped on his horse, and dashed off. His adjutant-general and aides hurried away with him.

The sound of musketry on Sherman's left and the booming of artillery back toward Decatur, five miles away, grew in volume. Becoming anxious, and knowing the intrepidity of Hood, he ordered Schofield to send a brigade to Decatur at once. He returned to the Howard House, and was walking nervously up and down the porch, listening to the noise, when one of McPherson's aides rode up rapidly. His horse was in a foam; the rider was pale and excited. Sherman ran to meet him with a question on his lips.

"General McPherson is either killed or a prisoner!" the aide cried. He went on to explain, breathlessly, that, after leaving General Sherman, McPherson had ridden off to the head of General Dodge's corps, to which he had given certain orders; then he had passed in full view of many of the troops in the direction of General Blair's position, after which, alone or attended by only one orderly, he had disappeared into dense woods. A sound of musketry was next heard from these woods, and soon McPherson's horse came galloping back, bleeding and riderless. It was learned later that upon entering the forest the general had suddenly met some Confederate skirmishers. They called upon him to surrender; he started to ride to the rear, and was shot down dead or dying.

Hood was now making a bold attack; it seemed evident that he intended to throw a superior force

against Sherman's left, while the latter's front would be checked by the fortifications of Atlanta. Sherman had no time just then to grieve over the death of his friend. He gave instant orders for the repulse of the enemy—already the entire line was becoming engaged in battle—and placed General Logan in temporary command of the Army of the Tennessee. We have dramatic portraits of the soldierly-appearing Logan, ever a bit spectacular, as he succeeded the unfortunate McPherson in command. "Bareheaded, flushed with rage and an instinct to avenge the death of his commander and friend, he spurred his high-strung black charger to its utmost speed, and dashed along the lines of his troops, somewhat disordered in places, restoring confidence everywhere by his gallant bearing and sharp, assuring words." Some persons have since asserted that he shrieked the words, "McPherson and Revenge!" but whether he did, or did not, it is certain that, throughout this trying engagement, he behaved in a way which did honor to the American valor shown alike by the Blue and the Gray.[1]

The sounds of battle grew more and more furious. Within another hour an ambulance bearing the body of McPherson came in to Sherman, who had it tenderly carried inside of the Howard House. But how little can death count when the living must think of war! Sherman found that the wallet, into which McPherson had thrust his papers on

[1] "What Sheridan was at Winchester that was Logan at Atlanta."—*F. Y. Hedley.*

riding away, was gone, and he felt alarmed. In that wallet was an important letter of instruction and information which he had written the dead general the previous night. "I was much concerned," says Sherman. But, fortunately enough, the wallet was found in the haversack of a Southern prisoner who was captured a few minutes after McPherson's death, and thus never reached the headquarters of General Hood. As Sherman gazed sadly on the remains of his dead friend, the shells of the enemy were raining on the Howard House, as if in vindictive pursuit of the stricken man. "Have the body carried to Marietta," ordered Sherman, "and I will see that it is taken back to his home in Ohio." Then he turned to give further orders for what was afterward called the "Battle of Atlanta." [1]

It may be inferred that it was no child's play to give such orders. The corps of General Hardee had sallied out from Atlanta, and, by making a circuit to the east, had struck General Blair's left flank. The battle, thus begun, raged throughout the day in front of the Seventeenth and Fifteenth Corps. But Hood's tactics did not prevail. At dusk the Confederates, "crushed and dispirited," drew off, with heavy cost. The total loss of the Northern

[1] McPherson was born November 14, 1828, and was therefore cut off in his very prime, at the early age of thirty-five years. Sherman made a report of his death to the secretary of war which was in itself a noble monument in words. "General McPherson fell in battle, booted and spurred, as the gallant and heroic gentleman should wish. Not his the loss, but the country's; and the army will mourn his death and cherish his memory."

forces was about 3,500. It had been a bloody conflict and nobly had Sherman and his men done their work. The skill of the Northern commander had been too much for the impetuous Confederate general.

After Sherman had recovered from the strain of the battle he set himself to the task of appointing a successor to McPherson as permanent commander of the Army of the Tennessee. "General Logan," he says, "had taken command by virtue of his seniority, and had done well, but I did not consider him equal to the command of three corps." He recognized the undoubted ability of Logan, but regarded him as a politician who looked to personal military fame as a stepping-stone to the gratification of his ambitions for civil preferment. Furthermore, Logan was not a regular army officer, and Sherman, who was now more than ever determined to capture Atlanta, desired commanders who were "purely and technically soldiers," and who could execute delicate manœuvres, requiring the utmost skill and precision. Yet he might have given the post to Logan had not General Thomas made strenuous objections.

As it was, General Howard was appointed to command the Army of the Tennessee. The selection was a good one. General Logan went back to his old corps, the Fifteenth, returning later to the North to assist in the political canvass; while Hooker, aggrieved that he himself had not been elevated to McPherson's place, asked to be relieved of command

of the Twentieth Corps, in the Army of the Cumberland. Poor Hooker was never a favorite of Sherman's, who was not slow to grant the request.

This incident gave rise to much unpleasant feeling on the part of Hooker's admirers, who asserted that he had been unfortunate enough to bring upon himself the jealousy of Sherman and General Thomas. "This is hardly probable," writes Sherman, "for we on the spot did not rate his fighting qualities as high as he did." Throughout he speaks of this commander in a way as unusual as it is bitter, which shows how strained their relations must have been. Sherman was, indeed, a good hater, and was as honestly sincere in his dislikes as in his likes.

In some respects, Grant agreed with Sherman, in the estimate of Hooker's character. He conceded that his achievements at Chattanooga had been brilliant, but regarded him as a dangerous man. "He was not subordinate to his superiors. He was ambitious to the extent of caring nothing for the rights of others." It is certain that Hooker had what another writer has termed "an overplus of self-esteem," but he was a brave man and a hard fighter. We can see, however, that his egotistical temperament did not tend to find favor with Sherman who, although a pardonable egotist himself, in a perfectly safe way, never let his self-respect or his ambitions run away with his head—even though his tongue occasionally led him into imprudence.[1]

[1] "His [Hooker's] disposition was, when engaged in battle,

On the night of July 26th Sherman moved the Army of the Tennessee out of its works for more activity. He planned to advance it rapidly to the right against the railroad below Atlanta, at the same time sending all the cavalry around by the right and left to make a lodgment about Jonesboro. As a result of this movement there was a sharp attack from the enemy on the morning of the 28th. The battle lasted until three o'clock in the afternoon, and each charge of the Confederate infantry was grandly repulsed. The enemy's losses were in the neighborhood of 5,000 men, and the result proved, in every way, a great victory for the Union, and, in a particular sense, for General Logan, whose Fifteenth Corps bore the brunt of the contest.

Sherman was delighted, and none the less so because Howard had acquitted himself so well in command of the Army of the Tennessee. It seems that the latter exposed himself freely, and when the firing finally ceased he walked the lines, whereupon the men, as reported to Sherman, "gathered about him in the most affectionate way, and he at once gained their respect and confidence."

The victorious officers and troops felt particularly encouraged by this day's work, for they realized that Hood could now be attacked, at his own disadvantage, outside his fortified lines. The men

to get detached from the main body of the army and exercise a separate command, gathering to his standard all he could of his juniors."—*Grant.*

of the Fifteenth Corps told Sherman (who always treated them in an unassuming, familiar way which they appreciated) that the battle had been for them "the easiest thing in the world." It was, they said, a common slaughter of the enemy; and they pointed out "where the rebel lines had been, and how they themselves had fired deliberately, had shot down their antagonists, whose bodies still lay unburied, and marked plainly their lines of battle. . . . All bore willing testimony to the courage and spirit of the foe." [1]

It is not to be forgotten that Sherman himself nearly lost his life during this action. A cannon ball passed directly over his shoulder and killed the horse of his orderly who rode a short distance behind him.

Thus the month of July ended, considerably in favor of the Union armies before Atlanta. True, their losses had been about 10,000 men, killed, wounded, or missing; but the Confederates had lost perhaps 1,000 more than that number without accomplishing anything. Sherman, with an army splendidly equipped, well-fed, and gaining in military experience every hour, remained placidly entrenched before the city. Hood, indeed, was already bringing disappointment to those who had fondly hoped that he would fall upon Sherman and capture the Northern forces. One Southern newspaper remarked satirically, "If Mr. Hood keeps on in this way of fighting, his army will be wiped out in

[1] "Memoirs of General William T. Sherman," Vol. II, p. 91.

ten days, and the Yankees will still have a few men left to go to Mobile."

The month of August opened hot and sultry, but the troops besieging Atlanta were but little inconvenienced. Their skirmish and main lines were in good position; the field batteries were covered by imposing parapets; an occasional shot or clatter of musketry gave animation to the scene. The men loitered about the trenches, or built huts for themselves, and seemed "as snug, comfortable, and happy, as though they were at home."

An amusing and highly characteristic incident occurred about this time. Sherman received notification from Washington that Brigadier-Generals Osterhaus and Alvan P. Hovey, had been appointed major-generals by President Lincoln. Both officers were very efficient, and had begun the campaign with Sherman as division commanders, but had now gone to the rear—Osterhaus on account of illness, and Hovey because of a certain dissatisfaction over the composition of his division. When Sherman heard of the promotions he was angry, since other prominent officers serving under him had not been "advanced a peg," and he wrote to the War Department, sarcastically observing that "if the rear be the post of honor, then we had better all change front on Washington."

To Sherman's amazement he received a personal letter from Lincoln, explaining that he had made the two appointments at the suggestion "of two men whose advice and character he prized most

highly"—namely, Generals Grant and Sherman. Sherman then recalled the fact that after the victory of Vicksburg he, with Grant, had recommended the advancement of Osterhaus and Hovey, among other officers. The President had good-humoredly turned the tables on Sherman—and the latter enjoyed the joke as much as any one.

A side-issue of the campaign which, but for its failure, might have formed one of the most dashing episodes of the war, should be briefly described. It involved that spirited soldier, General George Stoneman, at this time in command of the cavalry of Sherman's Army of the Ohio. Stoneman proposed to Sherman an inspiring project, it being nothing more or less than to break up the Macon Railroad and then make a raid on Andersonville, rescuing the thousands of Union prisoners who were confined there, "badly fed and harshly treated." The difficulties of such a cavalry movement were great, but the risk was well worth taking, since success meant so much of value to the Federals. Sherman gave his consent to the movement, saying, "If you can bring back to this army any or all of those prisoners of war it will be an achievement that will entitle you and your command to the love and admiration of the whole country."

The raid proved to be a dismal failure, although not through any lack of personal valor on the part of Stoneman or his cavalrymen. He succeeded in destroying a good deal of railroad rolling-stock and supplies, but at Clinton, Georgia, he found himself

surrounded, as he supposed, by a superior force. He promptly arranged for the escape of all his cavalry excepting a detachment of 700 men; and after occupying the attention of the enemy while his brigade commanders were cutting their way out, surrendered himself and his remaining forces to the Confederates (July 31st). It was some weeks before he was exchanged, and could return to service. He afterward did active work until the close of the war. Thus ended a scheme which, had it been crowned with success, would have made the name of George Stoneman memorable in the annals of our national history.[1]

It was early in August that Sherman had a serious disagreement with General John M. Palmer, of the Fourteenth Corps, who denied the right of the commander-in-chief to place him under the orders of Schofield, in connection with certain operations along the railroad below Atlanta. Palmer asserted that he ranked Schofield in the date of his commission as a major-general; Sherman decided in favor of Schofield, and Palmer, considering himself unjustly treated, sent in his resignation as commander of the Fourteenth Corps, at the same time securing permission to go home. Palmer, at a later date, said that he had offered to waive all question of rank in view of the fact that he was before the enemy, but that afterward, acting upon an unfriendly suggestion from Sherman, and con-

[1] General Stoneman, in future years, served as governor of California.

vinced that he could be of no further service at Atlanta, under the circumstances of the friction, had been forced into resigning. It is impossible to decide the merits of this quarrel. But Sherman was thoroughly justified in the confidence he reposed in Schofield, and it does not appear that he lost anything by his decision.

Just at this time Sherman telegraphed to General Halleck, at Washington: "We keep hammering away all the time, and there is no peace, inside or outside of Atlanta. . . . I do not think it prudent to extend any more to the right, but will push forward daily by parallels, and make the inside of Atlanta too hot to be endured. One thing is certain, whether we get inside of Atlanta or not, it will be a used-up community when we are done with it."

At the North the coming autumn elections were giving the politicians much food for thought, and the question of the soldier-vote was, of course, an important one. To Schuyler Colfax, who was desirous that nine regiments of Indiana troops should be ordered where they could be furloughed so as to vote, Sherman wrote, in his curt, forcible manner, that the thing was impossible. "I have not now troops enough to do what the case admits of without extra hazard, and to send away a single man would be an act of injustice to the remainder. I think you need not be concerned about the soldiers' vote. They will vote—it may not be in the coming election—but you may rest assured the day will

come when the soldiers will vote, and the only doubt is, if they will permit the stay-at-homes to vote at all."[1]

Ever the same contempt for the "statesmen" and the non-combatants! Sherman was prone to forget that if all the males up North had gone to war the business of the North, and therefore the war itself, would have fared very ill.

It was on the day he wrote thus contemptuously, though naturally, to Colfax that he heard two interesting pieces of news. One was that Admiral Farragut had successfully entered Mobile Bay; the other, that he himself had just been appointed a major-general in the regular army. He was not overjoyed at the second announcement; he wished the President had waited until he was safely ensconced in Atlanta. When that would be he could not determine, although he kept busily "hammering" away with his artillery, besides trying to decoy the enemy outside their trenches, and moving his troops here and there, to make a "circle of desolation" around the city. He did not propose, now, to assault the works, which were far too strong. A conviction was forced upon him that the Confederates would hold fast, even though his artillery should batter down every house.

But Sherman was nearer to victory than he knew. On the night of the 1st of September, after a heavy

[1] "The Sherman Letters," p. 238. Lincoln also wrote to Sherman as to the voting of troops in Indiana, but explained that his letter was "in no sense an order."

engagement between Union troops and Hardee's corps of Hood's army, mysterious explosions sounded from Atlanta. Hood, finding his position entirely too precarious for comfort—for the Federal army was now interposed between him and Hardee—and considering the city at last untenable, was blowing up his ammunition trains and magazines. By daybreak of the 2d, he had stolen away from Atlanta and was moving toward Macon. Later in the morning blue-coated soldiers began to march into the city and Sherman had sent ringing over the wires to Washington his famous announcement: "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won!" Next to the capture of Richmond, which Grant had not yet accomplished, that of Atlanta was all-important. Sherman was delighted, in a grim but none the less decided way; General Thomas, the imperturbable, "snapped his fingers, whistled, and almost danced"; men went fairly wild at the news, as they shouted, and laughed, and hugged each other. As Sherman heard this "glorious laughter," as he calls it, he felt that for the toils and hardships of the previous three months they were now amply repaid.

When the explosions caused by order of General Hood were occurring, Sherman, who was bivouacked twenty miles from Atlanta, woke up a neighboring farmer to inquire of him what he thought the sounds meant. The farmer said, "it sounded just like a battle." Some generals would have consulted their staff-officers on such a subject, but Sher-

man, who liked nothing better than to fraternize with "natives" and the country people, preferred to ask the opinion of a farmer inexperienced in the arts of war.

There are many persons still living who can recall how the North bubbled over with enthusiasm when the glad tidings flashed over the wires from the telegraph-station at Chattahoochee bridge, "Atlanta is ours and fairly won!" Lincoln, who had passed an anxious summer awaiting good news from somewhere, who feared Grant was checkmated anent Richmond and Petersburg, and who was afraid Sherman had "run up against an impassable barrier," knew how opportune this triumph was. Success to the nation's arms was absolutely essential if the Republican party were to win in the coming November—and here was a success which filled the requirements, and probably made his own re-election certain.

The President, always only too glad to honor those of his generals who did something decisive, at once wrote the following "thanksgiving" letter:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
"*Washington, D. C., September 3, 1864.*

"The national thanks are rendered by the President to Major-General W. T. Sherman and the gallant officers and soldiers of his command before Atlanta, for the distinguished ability and perseverance displayed in the campaign in Georgia, which, under Divine favor, has resulted in the capture of Atlanta. The marches, battles, sieges, and other

military operations, that have signalized the campaign must render it famous in the annals of war, and have entitled those who have participated therein to the applause and thanks of the nation.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
"President of the United States."

Grant, no less appreciative, and delighted at the news, both for public and personal reasons, telegraphed Sherman from City Point, Virginia: "I have just received your despatch announcing the capture of Atlanta. In honor of your great victory, I have ordered a salute to be fired with shotted guns from every battery bearing upon the enemy. The salute will be fired within an hour, amid great rejoicing."

Grant was just as quick as Lincoln to recognize the value, from a party point of view, of Atlanta's fall. It was, he says, "the first great political campaign for the Republicans in their canvass of 1864. It was followed later by Sheridan's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley; and these two campaigns probably had more effect in settling the election of the following November than all the speeches, all the bonfires, and all the parading, with banners and bands of music, in the North."

Throughout September the North was fairly aglow with pleasure and excitement. The press was exultant, while the "Copperheads" and the cynics who had predicted that no successful war could be waged against the South while McClellan was in retirement, suddenly became tongue-tied. "The fall

of Atlanta," wrote Horace Greeley in the New York *Tribune*, "is truly, and in full military sense, the loss of Georgia; and it is not too much to say that this crowning triumph of General Sherman's campaign does, in effect, enclose the Rebellion within the narrow limits of the Carolinas and of southern Virginia. It destroys beyond all hope of recovery the unity of the Confederacy, and all probability of its retaining a permanent hold on the continent. Not New Orleans, not Vicksburg, not Chattanooga, not Gettysburg, was such a victory as this. It comes at an opportune moment. Let the loyal North take heart. Devoutly thankful for the great mercy which is granted us, let us grow stronger in resolve, more unalterable in purpose, more religiously confirmed in faith, that the Rebellion shall be utterly crushed and the Free Union of these States be re-established forever." [1]

And three days later, in warmly urging Lincoln's re-election, Greeley said: "Let the country shake off its apathy; let us realize what is the price of defeat—a price neither we nor the world can afford—let it be understood how near we are to the end of the Rebellion, and that no choice is left us now but the instrument put into our hands, and that with that we can and must finish it."

McClellan, now the Democratic nominee for the Presidency, was certainly doomed, so far as his ever occupying the White House might be concerned.

The joy in the North was reflected, in the ob-

[1] New York *Tribune*, September 3d, 1864.

verse way, by the gloom in the South. The latter did not abandon hope, being full of American pluck, but it was inevitably depressed and chagrined. J. B. Jones, a clerk in the Confederate War Department records in his diary, under the date of September 4th: "Atlanta has fallen, and our army has retreated some thirty miles; such is Hood's despatch, received last night. . . . We have not had sufficient generalship and enterprise to destroy Sherman's communications. Some 40,000 landowners, and the owners of slaves, are at their comfortable homes, or in comfortable offices, while the poor and ignorant are relied upon to achieve independence! And these, very naturally, disappoint the President's [Davis] expectations on momentous occasions. . . . The loss of Atlanta is a stunning blow." [1]

Another Southern view of Sherman's victory is worthy of quotation. It is from the pen of a lady who tells of her own experiences and observations in "Richmond During the War." "At midsummer [1864] we beheld both campaigns of the enemy essentially failures," she writes, referring to Sherman and Grant. "Could the military situation which then existed have been preserved, the election of McClellan to the Presidency of the United States would have been secured, and a peace negotiation, that would have placed the South in a different status, might have been effected. But these bright

[1] Jones, "Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital," Vol. II, p. 277.

prospects were changed in a day. Whether from a desire to gratify popular clamor, or other causes at best imperfectly understood, General Johnston, who was then executing the masterpiece of strategy of the war, with a perfection of design and detail which delighted his own troops and challenged the admiration of his enemy,—who had performed the prodigy of conducting an army in retreat over three hundred miles of intricate country . . . was removed. . . . The fall of Atlanta was a severe blow to the Confederacy, and was received in Richmond with unconcealed distress. Mr. Davis was sensibly affected by this misfortune. Toward the close of September he made a visit to Georgia, and delivered a remarkable speech at Macon. He told the people that it grieved him to meet them in adversity, but that he considered the cause not lost—that sooner or later Sherman must retreat, and then would he meet the fate that befell Napoleon in his retreat from Moscow." [1]

General Hood, in the volume of his reminiscences, published some years after the war, says, at its very close, that "no man is justly entitled to be considered a great general, unless he has won his spurs. Had General Johnston possessed the requisite spirit and boldness to seize the various chances for victory which were offered him, he never would have allowed General Sherman to push him back one hundred miles in sixty-six days, from one mountain

[1] "Richmond During the War; Four Years of Personal Observation," by "A Richmond Lady."

stronghold to another, down in the very heart of the Confederacy." [1]

The grievances of Hood, and the contrary grievances of Johnston, seem plausible enough in their different ways—but all their grievances put together only show that Sherman was a greater general than either of these two Confederate officers.

General H. W. Slocum, who now commanded the Twentieth Corps, north of Atlanta, had been the first to enter the city. Sherman himself then moved back with the other troops, occupying a line extending from Decatur on the left to Atlanta in the centre, with commands reaching out of the town for some distance to the right. It was found that the place had been badly damaged by the "hammering" of Sherman's artillery. Almost every garden and yard had its cave, for the protection of the citizens. Some of these bomb-proofs were fifteen feet deep, and well covered. "All along the railroad, around the intrenchments and the bluff near the city," relates Captain Conyngham, "were gopher holes, where soldiers and citizens concealed themselves." The Union troops now settled down for a brief rest; officers and men looked happy; the regimental bands, which had been almost silent for so many weeks, played joyous airs. "Even the bray of the half-starved government mule seemed mellow and melodious, as it added to the din."

[1] "Hood's Advance and Retreat; Personal Experiences in the United States and Confederate States Armies."

Sherman now resolved upon a measure, due to military necessity, which earned for him in the South the reputation of being a tyrant and a monster of cruelty. He not only denied to "all civilians from the rear" (meaning principally sutlers and traders waiting at Nashville and Chattanooga like hungry vultures) the privilege of "the expected profits of civil trade" (*i. e.*, the chance to swindle the army by selling poor supplies at high prices), but furthermore, he ordered that all citizens and families of Atlanta should temporarily leave the place, with the option of going either North or South, "as their interests or feelings dictated." "I was resolved," says Sherman, "to make Atlanta a pure military garrison or depot, with no civil population to influence military measures. I had seen Memphis, Vicksburg, Natchez, and New Orleans, all captured from the enemy, and each at once was garrisoned by a full division of troops, if not more; so that success was actually crippling our armies in the field by detachments to guard and protect the interests of a hostile population."

The general realized what a storm of invective this order would bring down upon him from the enemy. And he wrote to Halleck, only two days after the evacuation of Atlanta by Hood, that "if the people raise a howl against my barbarity and cruelty, I will answer that war is war, and not popularity seeking. If they want peace, they and their relatives must stop the war." He tells us,

too, that he knew this measure would convince the South that the North was in earnest, and that, if the former were sincere in its expressed desire to "die in the last ditch," the opportunity would soon come.

Jefferson Davis characterized the order as a piece of barbarity only comparable to "Alva's atrocious cruelties to the non-combatant population of the Low Countries." He says, in his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," that it involved the immediate expulsion from their homes, "and only means of subsistence, of thousands of unoffending women and children, whose husbands and fathers were either in the army, in Northern prisons, or had died in battle." And he adds, with bitterness: "At the time appointed the women and children were expelled from their houses, and, before they were passed within our lines, complaint was generally made that the Federal officers and men who were sent to guard them had robbed them of the few articles of value they had been permitted to take from their homes. The cowardly dishonesty of its executioners was in perfect harmony with the temper and spirit of the order."

While Sherman was computing the losses of his campaign,[1] and debating the plans of another

[1] The respective losses of the Northern and Southern armies during the campaign, from May to September inclusive, have been summarized as follows:

which should take him out of Georgia as successfully as he had got into it (for he was certainly not unmindful that he was in the heart of a hostile country, with a Confederate army near him) he was engaged in an angry, but not uncongenial, correspondence with General Hood. The latter protested, in most vigorous language, against Sherman's order for the depopulation of Atlanta. "Permit me to say," he wrote, "that the unprecedented measure you propose, transcends, in studied and ingenious cruelty, all acts ever before brought to my attention in the dark history of war. In the name of God, and humanity, I protest, believing that you will find that you are expelling from their homes and firesides the wives and children of a brave people."

Sherman at once answered this protest with the zest of the willing letter-writer. "You style the measure proposed," he wrote back, "unprece-

| | |
|---|---|
| *Union Army:* | |
| Killed | 4,423 |
| Wounded | 22,822 |
| Missing | 4,442 |
| Total Northern loss | 31,687 |
| *Southern Army:* | |
| Killed (Johnston) | 1,221 |
| " (Hood) | 1,823 |
| Wounded (Johnston) | 8,229 |
| " (Hood) | 10,723 |
| Prisoners captured by Sherman's army, and officially reported to him | 12,983 |
| Total Southern loss | 34,979 |

dented, and appeal to the 'dark history of war' for a parallel, as an act of 'studied and ingenious cruelty.' It is not unprecedented; for General Johnston himself very wisely and properly removed the families all the way from Dalton down and I see no reason why Atlanta should be excepted. Nor is it necessary to appeal to the dark history of war, when recent and modern examples are so handy. You yourself burned dwelling houses along your parapet, and I have seen to-day fifty houses that you have rendered uninhabitable because they stood in the way of your forts and men. You defended Atlanta on a line so close to town that every cannon-shot, and many musket-shots from our line of investment, that overshot their mark, went into the habitations of women and children. . . . I say that it is kindness to these families of Atlanta to remove them now, at once, from a scene that women and children should not be exposed to, and the 'brave people' should scorn to commit their wives and children to the rude barbarians, who thus, as you say, violate the laws of war as illustrated in the pages of its dark history.

"In the name of common sense, I ask you not to appeal to a just God in such a sacrilegious manner. . . . Talk thus to the marines, but not to me, who have seen these things, and who will this day make as much sacrifice for the peace and honor of the South as the best-born Southerner among you! If we must be enemies, let us be men, and fight it

out as we propose to do, and not deal in such hypocritical appeals to God and humanity. God will judge us in due time, and He will pronounce whether it be more humane to fight with a town full of women and the families of a 'brave people' at our back, or to remove them in time to places of safety among their own friends and people."

Of course this very pungent defense brought forth a long and acrimonious counter-argument from General Hood. He ended by saying: "We will fight you to the death! Better die a thousand deaths than submit to live under you or your government and your negro allies!" Both generals had by this time thoroughly lost their respective tempers—not of the best, in either case, in times of stress—and were becoming childishly grandiloquent. At the same time Mayor Calhoun, of Atlanta, and several members of the city council, were writing Sherman, picturing to him the "appalling and heartrending" loss and suffering which the removal of the non-combatants was entailing. "The woe, the horrors, and the suffering, cannot be described by words; imagination can only conceive of it, and we ask you to take these things into consideration."

It was in answer to this that Sherman made use of his famous expression, "War is cruelty," translated into the more emphatic axiom, "War is hell!" Here are a few paragraphs from his reply; they are worth quoting:

"The use of Atlanta for warlike purposes is in-

consistent with its character as a home for families. . . . Our military plans make it necessary for the inhabitants to go away, and I can only renew my offer of services to make their exodus in any direction as easy and comfortable as possible. You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out. I know I had no hand in making this war, and I know I will make more sacrifices than any of you to-day to secure peace. But you cannot have peace and a division of our country. . . . You might as well appeal against the thunder-storm as against these terrible hardships of war. I want peace, and I believe it can only be reached through union and war, and I will ever conduct war with a view to early and perfect success. . . . Now you must go, and take with you the old and feeble, feed and nurse them, and build for them, in more quiet places, proper habitations to shield them against the weather until the mad passions of men cool down, and allow the Union and peace once more to settle over your old homes at Atlanta."

Doubtless the mayor and city council were not convinced. Argument on either side did little good in those days. In the meantime Sherman had written to General Halleck, stating why he had made the much-contested order, and adding: "These are my reasons; and, if satisfactory to the government of the United States, it makes no difference

whether it pleases General Hood and *his* people or not." To this letter Halleck had replied that his course was fully approved by the War Department. "The safety of our armies," he wrote, "and a proper regard for the lives of our soldiers, require that we apply to our inexorable foes the severe rules of war. . . . I have endeavored to impress these views upon our commanders for the last two years. You are almost the only one who has properly applied them."

There is no doubt that the order of removal was exceedingly harsh, and caused many hardships; but it was justified as a military necessity, exactly as many other cruel things "in the dark history of war," as Hood called it, are justified as acts of military necessity. The incident does not show us Sherman in an amiable light, but he is not to be blamed on that score. Conquering generals cannot afford to be amiable. Their paths are strewn with awful misery—not with roses. "War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MARCH TO THE SEA

By the middle of September Sherman's thoughts began to revolve around the question of the future. In other words, now that he had got his armies into Atlanta, what was he to do with them next? Hood's army had left the city, to be sure, but it was not far away, and Sherman was not certain of its intentions. "I concluded," he narrates, "to await the initiative of the enemy, supposing that he would be forced to resort to some desperate campaign by the clamor raised at the South on account of the great loss to them of the city." What would be the new campaign? Sherman already had an idea in embryo. As early as the 10th of September, General Grant had telegraphed to him from City Point: "As soon as your men are sufficiently rested, and preparations can be made, it is desirable that another campaign should be commenced. We want to keep the enemy pressed to the end of the war. If we give him no peace whilst the war lasts, the end cannot be distant."

After the fall of Atlanta, Jefferson Davis, recovering from his momentary depression at the blow, made several speeches with pluck if not exactly with wisdom, one of them to Hood's army, in which

he sought to invest the people of the state of Georgia with renewed confidence and to put fresh inspiration into the Confederate cause. He held out hopes that Sherman's army would soon be cut off from supplies, and would then be destroyed or captured by the Confederates.

Sherman at this very time was given to understand that Governor Brown, of Georgia, was tired of the war, and he actually invited that official to have a conference with him in Atlanta. He hoped that he might persuade Brown to withdraw all the Georgia troops from the armies of the Confederacy, and thus add to his military successes as conqueror of Atlanta the subtle successes of diplomacy. But the governor, although he sent the state militia to their homes to gather corn and sorghum, did not accept the general's invitation.

Next General Hood, becoming active once more, began to destroy the railroad in Sherman's rear, while General Forrest, a genius in the management of Confederate cavalry (now in middle Tennessee) and General Wheeler started in to be unpleasantly aggressive. Sherman was obliged to assume the offensive, going with portions of his force hither and thither, until, as Grant tells us, it was evident it would be impossible to hold the line from Atlanta back and yet leave Sherman any troops with which to continue his movements.

Sherman thus summarized the situation when he wrote home (October 11th): "I still hold Atlanta in strength, and have so many detachments guard-

ing the railroad that Hood thinks he may venture to fight me. He certainly surpasses me in the quantity and quality of cavalry, which hangs all around and breaks the railroad, and telegraph wires, every night. You can imagine what a task I have, 138 miles of railroad, and my forces falling off very fast."

As Grant puts it, "something had to be done; and to Sherman's sensible and soldierly mind the idea was not long in dawning upon him, not only that something else had to be done, but what that something else should be."

The "something else" to be done was described to Grant in a telegram which Sherman sent from Atlanta:

"We cannot now remain on the defensive. With 25,000 infantry and the bold cavalry he has, Hood can constantly break my road. I would infinitely prefer to make a wreck of the road and of the country from Chattanooga to Atlanta, including the latter city; send back all my wounded and unserviceable men, and with my effective army move through Georgia, *smashing things to the sea.* Hood may turn into Tennessee and Kentucky, but I believe he will be forced to follow me. Instead of being on the defensive, I will be on the offensive. . . . The difference in war would be fully twenty-five per cent. I can make Savannah, Charleston, or the mouth of the Chattahoochee."

In other words, Sherman desired to extricate himself from his new difficulties by a march southeast-

wardly to the seaboard, in the progress of which he would destroy railroads, crops, factories, war stores, etc.—thus ruining the country so far as to make it useless for the military and supply purposes of the Confederacy. He regarded the march as "a shift of base" of a strong army "from the interior to a point on the seacoast, from which it could achieve other important results." The "other important results," as they later developed, would have as an objective point, Columbia, S. C., where he would be in the rear of General Lee and Richmond. "It was a bold game, this marching away from Hood while the latter was trying to lure Sherman back to the line of the Tennessee by threatening his communications." [1]

Sherman, who in later life was often pestered by well-meaning friends to tell them when the thought of this march first "entered his mind," says, in his autobiography, that as soon as General Hood shifted his position to Palmetto Station, twenty-five miles southwest of Atlanta, he "saw the move in his mind's eye"; and that when Jefferson Davis made a speech at Palmetto (September 26th), in which he predicted that the Union army would have a retreat more disastrous than that of Napoleon from Moscow, he became even more positive in his conviction. In a few days he determined on the "time and manner."

Grant had previously looked upon Mobile as the objective point of Sherman's army. Indeed, this

[1] "A Bird's Eye View of Our Civil War."

had been for some time a favorite project of the lieutenant-general's. But he finally fell in with the scheme of a march to the sea because his military instincts grasped its value, practical and strategic. The danger of Sherman's present position was becoming more and more apparent, and Hood's operations along the railroad back from Atlanta grew more and more annoying. The Union troops were making a brave and spirited defense in certain entrenched positions, yet there was great risk of their capture, as evidenced, for example, in the straits of the men who held Allatoona, under the indomitable General Corse. In a fierce attack here he was shot through the face, but bravely stuck to his post, amid great odds, and repulsed the enemy.

"How could I keep open my line of communication with the North and also keep up this warfare?" Sherman asked himself. And, having at last obtained Grant's consent to the proposed march, he began to make all his preparations and to dispose properly of his troops. "Sherman," says Grant, "thought Hood would follow him, though he proposed to prepare for the contingency of the latter moving the other way while he was moving South, by making Thomas [who had been sent to Nashville] strong enough to hold Tennessee and Kentucky. I, myself, was thoroughly satisfied that Hood would go north, as he did." [1] So Sherman ordered a large force to Thomas's assistance, in-

[1] "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant."

cluding General Schofield, commanding the Army of the Ohio.

On the 2d of November Sherman's scheme of the march through Georgia was officially approved. It had not found great favor at Washington. "Even when it came to the time of starting," Grant relates, "the greatest apprehension as to the propriety of the campaign he was about to commence filled the mind of the President, induced, no doubt, by his advisers. This went so far as to move the President to ask me to suspend Sherman's march for a day or two until I could think the matter over. My recollection is, though I find no record to show it, that out of deference to the President's wish I did send a dispatch to Sherman asking him to wait a day or two, or else the connections between us were already cut, so that I could not do so."

Grant very handsomely adds that the entire credit of the plan, in its conception and execution, belongs to Sherman. "I was in favor of Sherman's plan from the time it was first submitted to me," he observes. But there were many people who realized that Sherman was taking great chances; some, indeed, firmly believed that he was again about to play the part of a lunatic. It was not strange, therefore, that the lieutenant-general did not give the plan instant approval. So late as the 1st of November he had telegraphed Sherman, probably at Lincoln's suggestion: "Do you not think it advisable, now that Hood has gone so far north, to entirely ruin him before starting on your proposed campaign?

With Hood's army destroyed, you can go where you please with impunity."

Sherman, evidently much wrought up over a possible change in his plans, sent Grant two telegrams in reply. In the second one he said :

"If I turn back the whole effect of my campaign will be lost. By my movements I have thrown Beauregard[1] [Hood] well to the west, and Thomas will have ample time and sufficient troops to hold him until reinforcements from Missouri reach him. We have now ample supplies at Chattanooga and Atlanta, and can stand a month's interruptions to our communications. I do not believe the Confederate army can reach our railroad lines except by cavalry raids, and Wilson [General J. H. Wilson] will have cavalry enough to checkmate them. I am clearly of the opinion that the best results will follow my contemplated movement through Georgia."

It was then that Grant had given his consent in the words, "Go on as you propose." We can imagine the joyous twinkle in Sherman's clear eyes when he received this final *imprimatur*. He hurried forward the preparations for the march of three hundred miles. The sick and wounded were sent to Chattanooga; the troops garrisoning the railroad back from Atlanta, and designed for the march, were quickly brought into the city ; and instructions were given to render the country to the

[1] General Beauregard was now exercising a general supervision over the movements of Hood and his army, having been made commander of the "Military Division of the West."

rear as useless as possible to the enemy (by the destruction of tracks, mills, factories, etc.). The army, thoroughly equipped and organized, now comprised about 60,000 men, divided into a right wing, commanded by Major-General O. O. Howard, and a left wing, commanded by Major-General H. W. Slocum. Of these forces there were some 53,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and nearly 2,000 artillery. The right wing was composed of the Fifteenth Corps (Osterhaus) and the Seventeenth Corps (Blair) while the left wing comprised the Fourteenth Corps (J. C. Davis) and the Twentieth Corps (A. S. Williams). The cavalry division, under Kilpatrick, was held subject to Sherman's personal orders.

Without divulging to the troops the object or ultimate destination of the march, Sherman issued a "special field" order, wherein he indicated the requisites of the campaign. There was to be no general train of supplies, but each corps was to have its own ammunition-train and provision-train. The army was to "forage liberally" on the country during the march ; each brigade commander was to organize a good foraging party which would gather, along the route traveled, all necessary corn, horse-feed, meat, vegetables and the like. Soldiers must not enter the dwellings of the inhabitants, "or commit any trespass;" but during a halt they might "gather turnips, potatoes, and other vegetables, and drive in stock in sight of their camp." Horses, mules, and wagons were to be appropriated freely, although discrimination was to be made be-

tween the rich, "usually hostile," and the poor, "usually neutral or friendly." Negroes, when able-bodied and destined to be serviceable, might be taken with the army along the route, but it was hinted that none would be allowed to hamper the moving columns.

Sherman had given the greatest possible attention to the artillery and wagon trains. Each gun, caisson and forge was drawn by four teams of horses. There were in all about twenty-five hundred wagons, with six mules to each, and six hundred ambulances, with two horses to each. A goodly supply of ammunition was stored in the wagons, and each soldier carried forty rounds. The troops had over a million rations, (about twenty days' supply), together with beef-cattle, to be driven along on the hoof, and five days' allowance of fodder. Sherman knew that Georgia would furnish, under protest, the rest of the food. All superfluous men, baggage and artillery were sent to the rear. "The Northern army," as General Force aptly expresses it, "was an athlete stripped for contest."

On the 14th of November Colonel Poe, of the Engineer Corps, began a "special task of destruction." He superintended the demolition of the railroad depot, roundhouse and machine shops in Atlanta—structures which might aid the Confederates, should they repossess them, in the operations of war. In one of these machine shops, used as an arsenal by the secessionists, were stored piles of shot and shell; fire was applied to the wreckage of

the buildings; during the night there were loud explosions from the shells; the fire reached a block of stores near the depot; the heart of the city was in flames. Already Sherman had cut all telegraphic and railroad communication with the North; the army stood detached from its friends and was dependent upon itself and the resources of its undaunted commander.

The march from Atlanta began the next morning, the 15th. The right wing and cavalry followed the railroad southeast toward Jonesboro, and General Slocum, with the Twentieth Corps, led off to the east toward Madison. These were divergent lines, taken to prevent a concentration by the enemy at Sherman's real immediate objective, Milledgeville, about a hundred miles to the southeastward. Sherman, with the Fourteenth Corps and the rear guard of the right wing, remained to complete the loading of the trains and the destruction of buildings which might be converted to hostile uses. "The heaven is one expanse of lurid fire," writes Major Nichols; "the air is filled with flying, burning cinders; buildings covering two hundred acres are in ruins or in flames; every instant there is the sharp detonation or the smothered booming sound of exploding shells and powder. . . . The city, which next to Richmond, has furnished more material for prosecuting the war than any other in the South, exists no more as a means for injury to be used by the enemies of the Union." [1]

[1] "The Story of the Great March."

On the morning of the 16th of November, Sherman and his staff briskly rode out of Atlanta by the Decatur road, which was filled with the marching troops of the Fourteenth Corps. As he cantered along he could see the woods in which poor McPherson fell; behind him was the smouldering city, the black smoke rising like a pall over the ruins. Away in the distance was the rear of Howard's column, the gun-barrels of the soldiers glistening in the sun. One of the bands of the Fourteenth Corps struck up "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave"; the men caught the refrain, and sang the chorus of "Glory, glory, hallelujah!" with a spirit that fairly thrilled the not always responsive Sherman.

"Then," says the latter, "we turned our horses' heads to the east; Atlanta was soon lost behind the screen of trees, and became a thing of the past. . . . The day was extremely beautiful, clear sunlight, with bracing air, and an unusual feeling of exhilaration seemed to pervade all minds—a feeling of something to come, vague and undefined, still full of venture, and intense interest."

We must remember that the anxiety which was felt at the North regarding this hazardous movement, was emphasized by the fact that the wires and communication with the outside world had been cut off completely, and the utmost uncertainty was to prevail for a time as to the fate of the army. Thousands of people discussed the possible outcome, and in London the *Times* remarked,

judicially, though not sympathetically: "That it is a most momentous enterprise cannot be denied; but it is exactly one of those enterprises which are judged by the event. It may either make Sherman the most famous general of the North, or it may prove the ruin of his reputation, his army, and even his cause together." [1]

The soldiers seemed to be as much inspired as their commanding general. Many of them called out to him, as he rode past, "Uncle Billy, I guess Grant is waiting for us at Richmond!" The sentiment among the men was that Sherman was marching straight for the Confederate capital. There was a "devil-may-care" spirit pervading officers and men which made him "feel the full load of responsibility"; for success would be accepted as a matter of course, whereas, should he fail, the march would be adjudged "the wild adventure of a crazy fool." Sherman had no intention of marching direct to Richmond; he now designed to reach the seacoast at Savannah, or Port Royal.

On the first night out the general encamped by the roadside, near Lithonia. Already the work of destroying the railroad en route was merrily progressing. All night groups of men were busy heating and then bending the rails, so as to render them absolutely useless to the enemy. Sherman gave great attention to this matter of putting the tracks *hors de combat*. The favorite method was to

[1] London *Times*, December 3, 1864.

heat the middle of the rails on bonfires made of the cross-ties, and then to wind them around a telegraph pole or the trunk of a tree. Some of these twisted rails are still to be found in Georgia.

The next day Sherman and the troops with whom he traveled, passed, in military pageant, through the town of Covington, with flags unfurled and the bands playing patriotic airs. The whites of the place looked on with a sort of disgusted interest; the emotional, unthinking negroes went wild with joy, as they clustered around Sherman's horse, and hailed him as their deliverer. The poor savages—for they were little more than that—no doubt fondly believed that the Millennium had arrived, and that in future they would have nothing to do but idle, sing plantation songs, and eat in plenty. But as we have seen, Sherman was never troubled with any false sentiment about the black race, and he was resolved that his march should not be encumbered by numbers of useless negroes. He explained to one of them, more intelligent than the rest, that he desired the slaves to remain where they were, and not load down his army with "useless mouths," which would "eat up the food" needed by the soldiers; that a few of the younger blacks might be received as pioneers, but that most of them would not be allowed to follow, and thereby cripple, the army. In short, although he did not say so, he proposed that the South, not the North, should bear the black man's burden, as heretofore. We Northerners pursue the same policy to the present day. We are

very ready to say sweet nothings to the negro, but we go no farther. When it comes to dealing with him, or living with him, then we too often become suddenly cold, and leave that complex duty to the Southerner. Thus it was with Sherman, who had no idea of inviting famine through an empty theory.

While we are on this subject it is only fair to say that while many of the negroes in the South welcomed the Northern troops, yet many more remained faithful, unto the last, to their old masters. This does not mean that there was any moral justification for slavery, but it does mean that there were thousands of slaves who always regarded their masters as kind friends rather than as taskmasters. When we consider the degeneracy of a large proportion of the negro race to-day (a degeneracy from which a man like Booker T. Washington stands out as a delightful exception) we are tempted to say: "Slavery was wrong and theoretically inhuman, but have we Americans, with all our boasted civilization, done anything to make six out of every seven blacks better than they were in the old days?" It is a great problem—and we must let the South solve it, if solved it may be!

It was near Lithonia that Sherman saw passing him a soldier with a ham fixed on his bayonet, a jug of molasses under his arm, and a piece of honey in his hand. Catching the eye of "Uncle Billy," he remarked to his companion, in a low tone, but loud enough to be heard: "Forage liberally on the country"—a quotation from the special

field orders of the general. Whereupon Sherman reproved the man, explaining that "foraging" must be done in a systematic way, without excess, etc., etc. But it was a frightfully abused institution during the whole march, and the depredations of "Sherman's bummers," as these foragers were called, soon became a theme over which the most placid Southerners waxed red with rage. The "bummer," in fine, became a hideous comedian—inevitable yet disgraceful; a requisite of the march, yet a most disagreeable personage for the historian to dwell upon, now that the war has been over for so many years.

We have a Meissonier-like portrait of the "bummer," drawn by a skilled hand, in Hedley's "Marching Through Georgia." "Sherman had given him a personality, and specified his duties; but certainly no one could have been more surprised than the general himself, to see the aptitude of this creature for his task, and the originality of his methods." Theoretically, the official foraging parties, which turned over their captures of horses, mules, meat, grain, etc., to the commissary and quartermasters' departments, for issue in the regular order of things, should have amply sufficed for the needs of the marchers. But in point of fact under this "due process of law," there was seldom enough "loot" to satisfy everybody. The result was that each regiment sent out an independent foraging party, whose duty it was "to see that its particular command was furnished with all the delicacies the

country afforded." As the region was quite rich in provender, the result may easily be imagined.

When the "bummer" started out on his first day's jaunt he went either on foot, or bareback on some wheezy horse or mule. At the first farmhouse he came to he would steal a fresh mount. "Then he would search the place for provisions, and soon have his animal, and perhaps two or three others, loaded down with poultry, meats, meal, sweet potatoes, honey, sorghum, and frequently a jug of apple-jack; or, he would find a wagon and load it, with the aid of a few negroes, and hitch together mules and horses indiscriminately with such improvised harness as he could make out of old ropes, chains, and leather straps." Sometimes, on a hint from a friendly darky, he would open what looked like a newly-made grave but proved to be a snug receptacle for provisions.

In many cases the unfortunate farmers, alarmed by the approach of the Union army, had disappeared, taking with them what little they could. "Where the premises were abandoned, the 'bummer' made a clean sweep, appropriating everything he wanted, and a great many things he did not want. If the negroes on the place told stories of great cruelty they had suffered, or of bitter hostility to the Union, or if there were bloodhounds about, which had been used to run down slaves, the injury was generally avenged by the torch. Where the 'bummer' found women and children, he was usually as courteous as circumstances admitted. He would

'pass the time of day' with the old lady, enquire when she had heard from the 'old man,' and whether he was with Johnston (Hood), or Lee, winding up with kissing the baby. . . . The 'bummer' was a wily diplomat, and having established 'an era of good feeling' between himself and his unsuspecting victim, he cross-examined her in an innocent and insinuating way, managing to acquire a great deal of valuable information. . . . He learned all that was to be known of the neighbors farther down the road, whom he expected to 'raid' the next day—the quantity and description of supplies, and where they were to be found. Information under this head was usually yielded more willingly than upon any other subject; for it is a curious trait of human nature that a man (or woman) who has been robbed, or swindled in a trade, takes a keen enjoyment, perhaps disguised, in seeing his fellows made fully as miserable as himself."

The "bummer" usually confined his stealings to the country on each side of the road traveled by his own column. As the whole army marched in four columns, the various corps pursuing parallel roads, the "bummers" would sometimes sweep over a breadth of country covering sixty or eighty miles. And when they sneaked into camp with their plunder they were met with joyous welcome and watering mouths.

The "bummers" were, in short, independent raiders—the Bohemians or free-lances of the moving camp. Sometimes they would desert their com-

mands for days; sometimes they became nothing more or less than thieves on their own account. Colonel Nichols has left us a picture of such a party of "bummers" when discovered by some regimental officer, in the woods enjoying their spoil.

"'To what command do you belong?' asks the officer.

"'Well, we don't answer for anybody in particular,' replies one of the men; ''bout every corps in the army; eh, Bill, ain't that so?'

"'Bill' says, 'Reckon!' and thinks it a huge joke, and everybody except the interlocutor laughs.

"'How long have you been away from your regiment?'

"At this question the 'bummer' rises to his feet, and replies, rather more respectfully:

"'A week, or ten days, cap'n.'

"'Have you any authority for foraging?'

"'No, sir!'

"'What use or benefit are you to the service, to say nothing of the criminality of your absence without leave? Now, you belong to a class which has brought discredit upon your comrades. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, all of you!'

"The dozen muscular fellows who heard this little moral speech seemed to fail to see the point of it. One of them replied:

"'See hyar, cap'n; we ain't so bad, after all. We keep ahead of the skirmish line allers. We lets 'em know when an enemy's a-comin'; and then we ain't allers away from the regiment. We

turns over all we don't want ourselves, and we can lick five times as many "Rebs" as we are any day. Ain't that so, boys?'

"'Lick 'em! D——'em, yes! Why of course!' were the instant replies of the 'boys.'

"'Rather shoot "Rebs" than hogs any day!' roared the other 'bummer.'

"After a little scene like this the officer would conclude that high moral precepts might be quite lost upon the party and would quickly take his leave." [1]

The official foraging was a necessity on this march to the sea; the illicit foraging of the "bummers" became a great scandal, because it inflicted untold hardship, even ruin, on thousands of poor Southern farmers. Sherman deplored the existence of the "bummers," but did not lie awake at night thinking over their thefts. He was not throwing away any of his sympathy upon the Georgians—"war was war"—and he probably realized, too, that even he could not easily stamp out the "bumming." He could not, or would not, draw the reins too tight. As a result, he soon became the most sworn-at man south of Virginia; his name was made a synonym for cruelty, and a Georgia child who heard the awful words, "Sherman is coming!" fairly shook with fear.

Jefferson Davis refers to the march as if it were one continuous round of pillage. "The arson of the dwelling-houses of non-combatants, and the

[1] "The Story of the Great March."

robbery of their property, extending even to the trinkets worn by women, made the devastation as relentless as *savage instincts* could suggest." [1]

The author of "Richmond During the War," exclaims: "We hardly dare to refer to the sufferings endured by the people of that section of the South over which General Sherman drew the trail of war. Enough to say that desolation was written on almost every foot of ground, misery on almost every human heart. Let a pen more eloquent describe all except the fierce spirit of revenge that reared its hydra-head in every bosom, and quenched effectually the latent fires of love that once glowed in devotion to the Union. . . . Over these things we would fain throw the mantle of oblivion; but the wounds are too deep for the friendly covering to hide from view the ugly scars left by them."

Edward A. Pollard, the author of a Southern war history, which is still interesting though filled with contemporary bitterness, evidently regarded Sherman as little better than a wild beast—or perhaps, because he was supposed to have a soul, as worse than a beast. Other Southerners have been no less condemnatory, and although there is now little left of the rancor of war, it is certain that Sherman's name will ever be regarded askance by many people of Georgia and the Carolinas. There may come a time when our Southern brothers will weave garlands around a statue of Grant; there may come a time when by

[1] "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II, p. 570.

permission of the North Robert E. Lee will have a statue erected in his honor at Gettysburg, but there never will come a time, however remote, when William Tecumseh Sherman will find enthusiastic admirers in the country traversed by his "bummers." That fact does not imply anything against Sherman himself, but it does mean that in warfare he gave "no quarter."

To quote an unprejudiced Northern opinion, we may add that John C. Ropes, in his article on our general in the *Atlantic Monthly* (August, 1891), makes a number of pertinent citations to prove that Sherman thought he was justified in causing loss and damage to private and public property as a punishment for political conduct. "It can hardly be pretended that the devastation spoken of is that which follows naturally and inevitably in the wake of an invading army. . . . It is true that the orders issued to his army for its conduct on the great march are, though by no means strict, yet not in principle objectionable." But, to judge from his citations, Mr. Ropes thinks that Sherman did enunciate the principle that the infliction of devastation for the sake of punishment was within the rights of a general commanding, and sanctioned by the laws of modern civilized warfare. If this view can be correctly imputed to Sherman, he says, then the authorities are against him. "Military operations are not carried on for the purpose of inflicting punishment for political offenses. . . . Whatever the Georgians and South Carolinians suffered by

having to supply provisions, forage, fuel, horses, or military stores of any kind to Sherman's invading army, whether more or less in amount, was a mere incident of a state of war, for which neither General Sherman nor his army was to blame. But if Sherman purposely destroyed, or connived at the destruction of property which was not needed for the supply of his army or of the enemy's army, he violated one of the fundamental canons of modern warfare; and just so far as he directed or permitted this, he conducted war on obsolete and barbarous principles."

This is an axiom that no one can deny. Of course it is hard to say how far Sherman did, or did not, go out of his way to destroy property which was not needed either by him or the enemy; and it is, therefore, impossible to give a definite verdict as to his moral responsibility in this phase of the campaign. One thing is certain; Sherman believed that the more sternly war was waged, the sooner it would be over; he may have thought that present relentlessness meant future kindness. And yet, as we review his correspondence during this period, and try to understand his mood, we are compelled to admit that a spirit of revenge seems to mar the otherwise admirable poise of this great general. We cannot grow enthusiastic when he writes to General Halleck: "We are not only fighting hostile armies, but a hostile people, and must make *old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war*, as well as their organized armies." [1]

[1] December 24, 1864. The italics are ours.

Let us, however, continue on the march, of which Sherman himself gives us many striking pen pictures. On the 22d of November, as he pushed forward toward his goal, he found himself on the plantation of General Howell Cobb, a former secretary of the United States treasury, and now a zealous Confederate. "Of course," relates Sherman, "we confiscated his property, and found it rich in corn, beans, peanuts, and sorghum-molasses." He gave instructions to spare nothing; soon huge bonfires were consuming the fence-rails, and the soldiers were reveling in the immense quantity of provisions on the estate.

The next morning Sherman rode into Milledgeville, then the capital of Georgia. His left wing united around this place during the day, while the right wing was at Gordon, only twelve miles away. The first stage of the march seaward had been triumphantly successful, and without dangerous opposition. It was here that Sherman, upon reading some of the Southern papers, found he was accused of being on an inglorious retreat to the seacoast, in the hope of finding safety there with a Union fleet. The people of Georgia were urged to encompass and destroy his army, and there was published a stirring appeal from General Beauregard in which he said: "Obstruct and destroy all the roads in Sherman's front, flank, and rear, and his army will soon starve in your midst. Be confident! Be resolute! Trust in an overruling Providence, and success will crown your efforts. I

hasten to join you in the defense of your homes and firesides."

On the same day Senator Hill had written from Richmond, urging his fellow Georgians to "act promptly and fear not." "Put everything at the disposal of our generals; remove all provisions from the path of the invader; and put all obstructions in his path. . . . You can destroy the enemy by retarding his march! Georgians, be firm! Act promptly, and fear not!"

Sherman in view of the feeble opposition offered to his progress, merely laughed, gave orders for the destruction of certain public buildings in the state capital, and resumed the march. But the Southern idea of the march became known in the North and caused much uneasiness. General Grant assured Lincoln that Sherman was in no danger; that he might possibly be prevented from reaching the point for which he had started out, but he would "get through somewhere," and would finally arrive at his chosen destination. "If the worst came to the worst he could return North." So the President assured anxious inquirers that Sherman and his men were in no peril. "Grant says they are safe with such a general, and that if they cannot get out where they want to, they can crawl back by the hole they went in at."

But what was Hood doing all this time? Instead of following Sherman, that general determined upon an invasion of middle Tennessee. He had the Mobile and Ohio Railroad repaired and occupied

Corinth, at which point he might secure supplies from Selma and Montgomery. General Thomas, in Nashville, was at first uncertain whether he ought to pursue Hood, if the latter followed Sherman, or defend Tennessee against the advance of the other Confederate leaders; but his doubts were soon set at rest. On the 19th of November Hood began his march toward Waynesboro. The forces under command of General Schofield, which had been in front of Hood, were ordered to retreat gradually from before the enemy, but to hold him as long as possible so that Thomas might get himself ready for the defense of the state. Schofield carried out this plan, in pursuance of which he finally retired to Franklin. Here a drawn battle was fought, in which Hood's soldiers made a wonderfully gallant charge, and sustained a heavy loss in consequence. The action resulted in no particular advantage for either side, but Schofield was now ordered back to Nashville, and, with the quiet deliberation for which he was remarkable, Thomas prepared to repulse Hood. The "Rock of Chickamauga" always liked to take his time before striking—so much so, indeed, that the authorities at Washington more than once became painfully impatient. Indeed, Thomas was now ordered either to move on Hood immediately, or else turn over his command to the quicker Schofield.

"The country was alarmed," says Grant, "the administration was alarmed, and I was alarmed lest . . . Hood would get north." Grant

made the wires warm with appeals to Thomas to attack at once, but the "Rock" would only reply that he was doing the best he could, etc., and would move as soon as possible. At length the exasperated lieutenant-general ordered General Logan to proceed to Nashville to relieve Thomas. He told Logan not to deliver the order until he reached Nashville, and, if he found that Thomas had actually moved, not to deliver it at all. "After Logan started," adds General Grant, "I became restless, and concluded to go myself. I went as far as Washington city, when a despatch was received from General Thomas announcing his readiness at last to move, and designating the time of his movement. I concluded to wait until that time. He did move and was successful from the start."

General Logan did not assume command ; Thomas splendidly vindicated himself at the battle of Nashville (December 15th and 16th). Hood and his army were overwhelmingly defeated, and the Confederate general was glad to escape beyond the Tennessee with the remnants of his forces. It was one of the grandest Union victories of the war. "With the exception of his rear-guard," wrote Thomas, "his army had become a disheartened and disorganized rabble of half-armed and barefooted men, who sought every opportunity to fall out by the wayside and desert their cause, to put an end to their sufferings."

Thus ended, for all practical purposes, the

military usefulness of Hood. Thomas's deliberation was no longer to be thrown into his face. He had admirably played into the hands of General Sherman.

The latter, in the meantime, had been pursuing his march toward Savannah, without suffering much inconvenience from the sporadic opposition of cavalry or detached infantry. The people of Georgia were in no position to offer any defense against the invaders. The frantic appeals from Richmond were without avail. How could it have been otherwise?

The cavalrymen of General Wheeler, one of the most dashing and capable of Confederate officers, were making demonstrations on Sherman's left front, while General Kilpatrick and the Union cavalry were kept active by way of opposition. But at no time was Sherman seriously impeded. After leaving Milledgeville he marched on Millen, where he paused one day to communicate with all parts of his army. Of course the destruction of railroad tracks went on gayly, and foraging was prosecuted with undiminished zest. The army was in good condition and position; the wagons were laden down with provisions; the men looked upon the whole expedition as a frolic; and Sherman, much pleased at results, now pushed on toward Savannah, which was strongly defended by General Hardee. The latter had been detached from Hood's army, in order to oppose the invaders.

One incident of the march (December 8th)

deserves record. Sherman, in riding through the fields, not many miles from Savannah, found a young Union officer whose foot had been blown to pieces by a torpedo planted in the road. He was waiting for a surgeon to amputate his leg. "There had been no resistance at that point," narrates Sherman; "nothing to give warning of danger, and the rebels had planted eight-inch shells in the road, with friction matches to explode them by being trodden on. This was not war, but murder, and it made me very angry." So angry, indeed, was the general that he ordered a lot of Confederate prisoners to be armed with picks and shovels, and made them march in advance along the road, so that they might either explode or discover their own torpedoes. "They begged hard, but I reiterated the order, and could hardly help laughing at their stepping so gingerly along the road, where it was supposed sunken torpedoes might explode at each step." But no more were found until Savannah was nearly reached. Such an incident gives a keen glimpse of the cruelties that sometimes disgraced the war on both sides. In this instance the cruelty of Sherman was justified, as a sort of ironic retribution; the cruelty of the dastard who devised the torpedo scheme threw a black shadow on the cause of the South.

By the 10th of December the several corps of Sherman's army had reached the defenses of Savannah. He found that the city was protected by a large garrison, and, as he once more caught sight of

a familiar parapet, together with deep ditches and canals full of water, it looked as if another siege were inevitable. He saw at once that his first step was to open communication with Admiral Dahlgren's fleet, hovering in the offing, and to do this it was necessary to capture Fort McAllister, a Confederate stronghold to the south of Savannah. General Hazen's division of the Fifteenth Corps marched down the right bank of the Ogeechee River and gallantly carried the fort by storm (December 13th). Sherman now established communication with the fleet, and thus sent off a note to Secretary of War Stanton in which he said, among other things: "The quick work made with Fort McAllister, the opening of communication with our fleet, and our consequent independence as to supplies, dissipate all their [the enemy's] boasted threats to head us off and starve the army. I regard Savannah as already gained."

A little later mails arrived from the North. There was great relief over the news of the army's safety. In one of two letters from General Grant (dated City Point, December 6th) he said that the most important operation toward ending the war would be to "close out" Lee and his army. "You have now destroyed the roads of the South," he went on, "so that it will probably take them three months without interruption to re-establish a through line from east to west. In that time I think the job here will be effectually completed.

My idea now is that you establish a base on the seacoast, fortify and leave in it all your artillery and cavalry, and enough infantry to protect them, and at the same time so threaten the interior that the militia of the South will have to be kept at home. With the balance of your command come here by water with all dispatch. Select yourself the officer to leave in command, but you I want in person. Unless you see objections to this plan which I cannot see, use every vessel going to you for purposes of transportation."

Sherman, who had set his heart on the capture of Savannah, was much concerned on reading this letter. The idea of going to Virginia by sea, instead of land, came upon him as a thunder-clap. He supposed that vessels to convey his troops to Virginia would soon pour in, and like a good general, he made ready to carry out Grant's orders—but he likewise determined to push operations "in hopes to secure the city of Savannah before the necessary fleet could be available." He wrote a long letter to Grant, explaining his position, and ending with: "Our whole army is in fine condition as to health, and the weather is splendid. For that reason alone I feel a personal dislike to turning northward. I will keep Lieutenant Dunn here [the aide-de-camp sent to Sherman with Grant's letters] until I know the result of my demand for the surrender of Savannah, but, whether successful or not, shall not delay my execution of your order of the 6th, which

will depend alone upon the time it will require to obtain transportation by sea."

In brief, General Sherman was not anxious that the "transportation" should be too quick in reaching him.

## CHAPTER X

### SAVANNAH AND THE CAROLINAS

In order to lose no time, General Sherman sent a flag of truce into Savannah (December 17th) within twenty-four hours of his writing to Grant, with a formal demand that General Hardee should surrender the city. After detailing the advantages of his position—the supplies now coming to him by water, the heavy ordnance he could bring to bear upon the enemy, the fact that he would soon be able to starve out the garrison, etc.,—Sherman wrote: "Should you entertain the proposition [to surrender] I am prepared to grant liberal terms to the inhabitants and garrison; but should I be forced to resort to assault, or the slower and surer process of starvation, I shall then feel justified in resorting to the harshest measures, and shall make little effort to restrain my army—burning to avenge the national wrong which they attach to Savannah and other large cities which have been so prominent in dragging our country into civil war."

The writer of this volume is a great admirer of General Sherman, but it is impossible for him to justify the threats as to "harshest measures," and an army "burning to avenge the national wrong." They savored too much of mediæval methods of

warfare, and were, moreover, going into the political ethics of the question rather than into the purely military aspect. The Union general was before Savannah as a soldier, and *not* as a statesman; he was there to fight, which he always did nobly, and not to discuss the rights and wrongs of the great conflict—a subject which he should have left to the politicians he always anathematized so roundly.

It must be candidly admitted that at this period, Sherman had worked himself into a revengeful spirit quite unseemly and unnecessary, so that as we look back at him, in these peaceful days, he appears actually vindictive. Of course, a great many people on both sides of Mason and Dixon's line had wrought themselves into frenzies of bad temper by this time, yet we do not like to see so great a man as the hero of our biography writing to Grant: "With Savannah in our possession, at some future time, if not now, we can punish South Carolina as she deserves, and as thousands of the people in Georgia hoped we would do. I do sincerely believe that the whole United States, North and South, would rejoice to have this army turned loose on South Carolina, to devastate that state in the manner we have done in Georgia, and it would have a direct and immediate bearing on your campaign in Virginia."

Hardee was in hard straits in Savannah. But he refused to surrender in a letter he wrote to Sherman, wherein he added, respecting the latter's threats: "I have hitherto conducted the military oper-

ations entrusted to my direction in accordance with the rules of civilized warfare, and I should deeply regret the adoption of any course by you that may force me to deviate from them in future."

Nothing now remained for Sherman but assault. "I concluded," he says, "to make one more effort to completely surround Savannah on both sides, so as further to excite Hardee's fears, and, in case of success, to capture the whole of his army." His forces had already invested the place on the north, south, and west, but there remained to Hardee, on the east, the use of an old plank road leading into South Carolina. Sherman had an easier victory than he hoped for: on the morning of December 21st, it was found that the city had been evacuated and the stars and stripes were soon floating from the government buildings. Hardee had wisely crossed the Savannah River with his army by a pontoon bridge, and thus beat a judicious retreat. To prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, he had destroyed an ironclad gunboat and a ram; but had left for the conquerors valuable artillery, with stores of ammunition, locomotives, cars, and steamboats, not to mention cotton and other supplies. Once more was Sherman's military acumen gloriously vindicated. The march to the sea, in its end as well as in its bold beginning and continuance, had proved a triumph that set the whole loyal North into another great frenzy of emotional patriotism. Sherman was more of a hero than ever.

The happy general sent off to Lincoln, the follow-

ing message which reached the President, very appropriately, on Christmas eve :

"SAVANNAH, GEORGIA,
"*December 22, 1864.*
"TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT LINCOLN,
"WASHINGTON, D. C.

"I beg to present you, as a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah, with one hundred and fifty guns, and plenty of ammunition; also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.

"W. T. SHERMAN,
"Major-General."

The President was delighted, and no wonder. He wrote Sherman an admirable reply to the message from Savannah. "Many, many thanks," he said, "for your Christmas gift—the capture of Savannah. When you were about leaving Atlanta for the Atlantic coast I was anxious if not fearful, but feeling that you were the better judge, and remembering that 'nothing risked, nothing gained,' I did not interfere. Now, the undertaking being a success, the honor is all yours; for I believe none of us went farther than to acquiesce. And, taking the work of General Thomas into the count, as it should be taken, it is indeed a great success. Not only does it afford the obvious and immediate military advantages; but, in showing to the world that your army could be divided, putting the stronger part to an important new

service, and yet leaving enough to vanquish the old opposing force of the whole—Hood's army—it brings those who sat in darkness to see a great light. But what next? I suppose it will be safer if I leave General Grant and yourself to decide. Please make my grateful acknowledgments to your whole army, officers and men."

It is not every President of the United States, either before or after Lincoln, who would have so frankly tendered to another *all* the credit of a great military movement.

During the Georgia campaign, or "March to the Sea," beginning with the departure from Atlanta and ending with the capture of Savannah, Sherman's casualties, comprising killed, wounded, and missing, aggregated only 764 men, while there were captured by his forces over 1,300 men. The property confiscated during the march included thousands of horses and mules, not to mention the supplies, or the fact that the army and its live stock obtained an abundance of food while in progress.

Sherman's own opinion of the strategic value of the movement is, naturally, of great importance. "I considered this march," he says, "as a means to an end, and not as an essential act of war. Still, then, as now, the march to the sea was generally regarded as something extraordinary, something anomalous, something out of the usual order of events; whereas, in fact, I simply moved from Atlanta to Savannah, as one step in the direction

of Richmond, a movement that had to be met and defeated, or the war was necessarily at an end." [1]

He goes on to say, however, that "were he to express his measure of the relative importance of the march to the sea, and of that from Savannah northward, he would place the former at one, and the latter at ten, or the maximum."

Although he does elsewhere, Sherman seems not to give here all necessary importance to the "moral effect" of the march—an effect which is clearly appreciated in Lincoln's letter thanking him for the "Christmas gift." In the actual march there was nothing extraordinary, but the wonderful characteristic of it—the genius of it, so to speak,—lies in the fact that Sherman, beset by difficulties around Atlanta, had the audacity to extricate himself therefrom by a movement in the very heart of the enemy's country, which, although it turned out so successfully, might have resulted in disaster to the army in progress.[2]

John Cannon well observes of the march that "of its vast influence toward closing the war, of the irreparable blow it inflicted on the battered

[1] "Memoirs of General William T. Sherman," Vol. II, p. 220.

[2] "The boldness [of the march] lay in conceiving its far-reaching advantages; not in carrying through the mere details of the progress."—"Bird's Eye View of Our Civil War." The London *Times* said, editorially, on January 9, 1865: "The capture of Savannah completes the history of Sherman's march, and stamps it as one of the ablest, certainly one of the most singular, military achievements of the war."

body of the Confederate states, the on-coming year, 1865, was to bring astounding evidence." [1]

In an official report on the campaign Sherman estimated the damage done to Georgia at a hundred millions of dollars. "This," he said, "may seem a hard species of warfare, but it brings the sad realities of war home to those who have been directly or indirectly instrumental in involving us in its attendant calamities."

Sherman had now reached an airy pinnacle of fame from which, fortunately, he was never obliged (save for several weeks of temporary unpopularity) to descend. In the North the people invested him with a halo of romance, and Congress formally tendered him the public thanks; at Savannah, where he was now comfortably quartered, his soldiers, without giving him a halo, accorded him their admiration and confidence. They knew him as he was—a sturdy, uncompromising warrior, rather than a cavalier, or an officer of the Dumaseque type. He wrote home just then: "I hear the soldiers talk, as I ride by, '*There goes the old man. All's right!*' Not a waver, doubt, or hesitation when I order, and men march to certain death without a murmur if I call on them, because they know I value their lives as much as my own. I do not feel any older, and have no gray hairs yet. . . . I do not fear want of appreciation, but, on the contrary, that an exagger-

[1] "Grant's Campaign for the Capture of Richmond."

ated faith will be generated in my ability, that no man can fulfil."

Sherman, in fine, was jubilant, and as he told Halleck, could afford, to "chuckle over Jeff Davis's disappointment in not turning the Atlanta compaign into a 'Moscow disaster.'" Furthermore, he had been pleased by the receipt of a letter from Grant, written just before the capture of Savannah, in which the lieutenant-general practically left Sherman free to go north by land, rather than by sea. "I did think," wrote Grant, "the best thing to do was to bring the greater part of your army here, and wipe out Lee. The turn affairs now seem to be taking has shaken me in that opinion. I doubt whether you may not accomplish more toward that result where you are than if brought here, especially as I am informed, since my arrival in the city [Washington], that it would take about two months to get you here with all the other calls there are for ocean transportation. . . . If you capture the garrison of Savannah, it certainly will compel Lee to detach from Richmond, or give us nearly the whole South. My own opinion is that Lee is averse to going out of Virginia, and if the cause of the South is lost he wants Richmond to be the last place surrendered."

Grant was, indeed, preparing to strike his great blow against Lee who was still making so fine a defense in Virginia. Shrewd Southerners, those who could read the handwriting on the wall, and were not carried away by sectional patriotism, be-

gan to see that unless the unexpected happened their cause would soon be lost. The fall of Savannah filled the South with uneasiness and created an unpleasant sensation in Richmond—where such sensations were now becoming the rule instead of the exception. The newspapers there kept themselves in cheer with difficulty. One of them said that as Savannah was neither a military nor a manufacturing place, its loss was not, after all, a very serious blow; but it admitted that the general military situation was unsatisfactory. Another journal advised "all cowards to leave immediately for England, Canada or Mexico." Still another predicted, wisely, that Sherman would soon advance north, and that hard times were in store for the Carolinas. "Men are silent, and some dejected," writes a looker-on in Richmond; "it is unquestionably the darkest period we have yet experienced." [1]

During Sherman's brief stay in Savannah, where he had about twenty thousand inhabitants to deal with, he appears to have been in an amiable frame of mind, and even conciliatory. He gave the citizens the option of remaining at home or going to Charleston or Augusta, and most of them remained. He even visited the house of one lady (the wife of a Confederate, General G. W. Smith) to see that she was receiving proper treatment at the hands of the conquerors. Further he established friendly relations with the mayor and city council, whom he allowed to resume charge of the

[1] Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary."

public interests of the city, although subject, of course, to military law. In short, the people of Savannah, who had come to regard Sherman as an ogre and his army as a ferocious phalanx of robbers, murderers, and ravishers, must have been most agreeably disappointed. And surely the general had a right to be in good humor.

Early in January there arrived from the North, on a revenue cutter, Secretary of War Stanton and other officials who wished to inspect the fruits of the latest victory. Mr. Stanton, who spent several days in the city, manifested a remarkable interest in, and sympathy for, the negroes, which, as Sherman shrewdly tells us, "was not of pure humanity, but of *politics*." The "negro question," which is still a question, forty years since, was already beginning to loom politically, and it was foreseen by many that the former slaves would secure the voting franchise. "I did not dream of such a result then," says Sherman, with commendable frankness, in quite refreshing contrast to the hypocrisy of certain alleged "friends of the colored brother." "I knew that slavery, as such, was dead forever, and did not suppose that the former slaves would be suddenly, without preparation, manufactured into voters, *equal to all others, politically and socially*."

It is hard for the new generation to realize the atmosphere of sympathy with which the negro was invested by the North forty years ago. It was often a sincere sympathy and there were many enthusiasts who actually believed that the colored

race should be placed on a social par with the white. Mr. Stanton is an inscrutable historical character, in whom there is much to condemn, much to praise, and we cannot undertake to say how far his professions of love were, or were not, honest. But he talked a great deal on the subject and got Sherman to arrange for him an interview with about twenty of the more intelligent negroes of the place, mostly Baptist and Methodist preachers. The secretary of war now proceeded to ask these men a variety of questions, regarding slavery, emancipation, etc., and finally demanded of them: "What is the feeling of the colored people toward General Sherman, and how far do they regard his sentiments and actions as friendly to their rights and interests, or otherwise?"

The answer to this was that the general's "deportment" toward the negroes in Savannah characterized him as "a friend and gentleman." It was added that "we have confidence in General Sherman, and think what concerns us could not be in better hands."

Sherman, as we have seen, was a sincere well-wisher of the negroes, but had no sympathy with impossible theories about them. He was undeniably disgusted at the gross conduct of Stanton. It certainly was a strange fact, he thought, that the great secretary of war should catechize colored men concerning the character of a general who had commanded a hundred thousand men in battle, had conducted an army across miles and

miles of hostile territory, and had just brought some thousands of freedmen along with the army to a place of security. But because he had not "loaded down his army with hundreds of thousands of poor negroes" he was supposed to be "hostile" to the black race.

Here it should be mentioned that Sherman had but recently received a confidential letter from General Halleck, warning him that certain persons near Mr. Lincoln were instilling doubts into the latter's mind as to the general's orthodoxy regarding the "inevitable Sambo." "They say," wrote Halleck, "that you have manifested an almost *criminal* dislike to the negro, and that you are not willing to carry out the wishes of the government in regard to him, but repulse him with contempt. They say you might have brought with you to Savannah more than fifty thousand, thus stripping Georgia of that number of laborers, and opening a road by which as many more could have escaped from their masters; but that, instead of this, you drove them from your ranks, prevented their following you by cutting the bridges in your rear, and thus caused the massacre of large numbers by Wheeler's cavalry."

Sherman seems to have satisfied Stanton that he was friendly toward the negro, and, at the suggestion of the secretary, he issued a special order providing for the enlistment of colored troops and giving the freedmen certain rights to settle on land. The general also convinced the zealous secretary

that there was no truth in the charges, indicated by Halleck, as to large numbers of negroes being driven from the ranks to be "massacred" by Wheeler's cavalry. These charges were due to the fact that on one occasion, when General Jefferson C. Davis, of the Fourteenth Corps, removed a pontoon bridge from Ebenezer Creek, during the "march to the sea," some of the black camp-followers tried to swim across the stream, in their fright at being left behind, and were drowned. Davis could not be blamed for the panic among the poor fellows who thought their only salvation was in following in the wake of "Massa" Sherman. It need hardly be added that General Wheeler, every inch the soldier and the gentleman, did not engage in the "massacre" of defenseless negroes.

Sherman was now revolving in his own mind the project to march northward, and join Grant's army. Grant himself wrote from City Point, on the 27th of December, that he believed the thing was practicable. "The effect of such a campaign," he added, "will be to disorganize the South, and prevent the organization of new armies from their broken fragments. Hood is now retreating, with his army broken and demoralized. His loss in men has probably not been far from twenty thousand, besides deserters. If time is given, the fragments may be collected together and many of the deserters re-assembled. If we can, we should act to prevent this. Your spare army, as it were, moving as proposed, will do it. . . . Of course, I shall not

let Lee's army escape if I can help it, and will not let it go without following to the best of my ability. Without waiting further directions, then, you may make your preparations to start on your northern expedition without delay."

Sherman began his preparations at once, although he was in doubt as to whether the administration at Washington wished him to take Charleston en route or confine himself to breaking up the railways of North and South Carolina with the ultimate object of uniting with Grant before Richmond. Later on Grant, wishing to aid Sherman in every way, ordered General Schofield's corps to the east, to advance up the Neuse River to Goldsboro, N. C., and also directed General A. H. Terry, the captor of Fort Fisher, to take Wilmington. The forces of Sherman were put in good order; recruits came from the North; men returned from furloughs, and his army soon comprised 59,000 infantry, 4,400 cavalry, and 1,700 artillery, together with about 2,500 six-mule wagons, sixty-eight guns, with six horses to each, sixty-eight four-horse caissons, and numerous ambulances. Each division had its own supply train; rations were to be issued, but reliance was to be placed on the customary foraging, and cattle were to be taken along on the hoof.

Sherman, not receiving any orders to the contrary, made up his mind to waste no time on Charleston or Augusta, although he purposely gave it out, with some ostentation, that he was heading for either one of those points. His real objective was

Columbia, South Carolina. By the middle of January all was ready; a garrison was left in charge of Savannah, and the movement began. We need not go into the details of the exacting march, with the vast difficulties caused by heavy rains, the bridging over of streams, and the constant necessity of "corduroying" roads. The opposition, indeed, at first came more from nature than from the military. The forces of the enemy immediately facing Sherman did not frighten him. General Wheeler still had a cavalry division, albeit much reduced in size by his constant fighting; and General Wade Hampton had been sent to South Carolina to raise men to punish Sherman for the "insolent attempt to invade the glorious state." Sherman was more concerned as to whether Lee would move southward to oppose him, not relishing the idea of having the supplies of his (Lee's) army cut off; or whether the remains of Hood's army (which were being hurried across Georgia) would join with the forces of Hardee, Wheeler, and Hampton to offer a spirited resistance. With such possibilities Sherman pursued his new march, which brought him, on the 16th of February, opposite Columbia.

The eyes of the whole country were now fixed upon Lee and Grant in Virginia and upon Sherman in the Carolinas. In the North already there was talk of making the latter a lieutenant-general, and hints that he might, in time, be a feasible Presidential candidate. But the general frankly

discouraged any such ideas, and wrote to John Sherman that he deemed it unwise to create another lieutenant-general. "Let the law stand as now," he said. "I will accept no commission that would tend to create a rivalry with Grant. I want him to hold what he has earned and got. I have all the rank I want." He added, apropos of the political gossip concerning him: "If you ever hear anybody use my name in connection with a political office, tell them you know me well enough to assure them that I would be offended by such association. I would rather be an engineer of a railroad, than President of the United States. . . . I have commanded one hundred thousand men in battle, and on the march, successfully and without confusion, and that is enough for reputation. Next, I want rest and peace, and they can only be had through war." [1]

Columbia was peaceably occupied by Sherman on the 17th of February, and the incident would have had but passing importance in the history of the campaign had it not been for the great fire which broke out that day in the town and finally reduced the best part of it to ashes.

The troops marched into one of the fairest cities of the South, with its wide, tree-lined streets, handsome buildings, and imposing new capitol, glittering in the sun; they left it blackened, charred, half-ruined. Yet there seems no reason to believe that the soldiers were, in the main, responsible

[1] "The Sherman Letters," p. 245.

for this result, although it was long believed, by his enemies, that Sherman had deliberately planned the destruction of the whole place. He had ordered General Howard to destroy the "public buildings, railroad property, manufacturing and machine shops"; but to spare Columbia's libraries, asylums and private dwellings. These orders gave rise to the assertion that the subsequent conflagration, which burned out the heart of the city, and led to some pillage, was to be attributed to the Union forces, while Sherman always contended that it resulted from bales of cotton set on fire by Wade Hampton's party of cavalry before it beat its retreat.

It is certain that Sherman did all in his power to relieve the unfortunate citizens, stricken alike by war and the flames. He had already made every effort to stop the fire on the night of the 17th, but without success. There is no doubt, however, that among a certain element of the Union soldiers that night there were drunkenness, rioting and acts of vandalism which, while perhaps inevitable, were nevertheless inexcusable—although one cannot hold Sherman personally responsible for this want of discipline, occurring, as it did, amid the indescribable confusion incident to a large fire.

William Gilmore Simms, the Southern novelist, afterward wrote a bitter arraignment of the conduct of some of the troops on that wretched night. Women, he says, were "hustled" from their rooms —their ornaments snatched away from them—the

clothes which they were trying to save from the flames stolen from their hands. "It was in vain that the mother appealed for the garments of her children. They were torn from her grasp and hurled into the flames. The young girl striving to save a single frock had it rent to fibres in her grasp. Men and women, bearing off their trunks, were seized, despoiled; in a moment the trunk was burst asunder with the stroke of the axe or gun butt, the contents laid bare, rifled of all the objects of desire. 'Your watch!' 'Your money!' was the demand. Frequently no demand was made. Rarely was a word spoken, where the watch, or chain, or ring, or bracelet, presented itself conspicuously to the eye. It was incontinently plucked away from the neck, breast, or bosom. Hundreds of women, still greater numbers of old men, were thus despoiled. The slightest show of resistance provoked violence to the person."[1]

Simms goes on to say that these acts were not always confined to the common soldier. "Commissioned officers, of rank so high as that of colonel, were frequently among the most active in spoliation, and not always the most tender or considerate in the manner and acting of their crimes; and, after glutting themselves with spoil, would often utter the foulest speeches, coupled with oaths as condiment, dealing in what they assumed, besides, to be bitter sarcasms upon the cause and country."

Undoubtedly a few private houses were fired by

[1] Simms, "The Burning of Columbia."

incendiaries; undoubtedly a few of the soldiers themselves were fired with bad Southern whiskey. But the author of "Marching Through Georgia," who was in Columbia at the time (while Simms was not) says distinctly: "There were some ghouls in this army, as in all others, no matter how civilized the age, or righteous the cause; and a very few such in the midst of thousands of honest and conscientious soldiers, could readily bring reproach upon all. But the author does not know, nor, after diligent inquiry, has he been able to find, any soldier who was in Columbia at that time, who knows of any such vandalism as was attributed to Sherman's army by William Gilmore Simms."

Colonel Nichols, who was also an eye-witness of the fire, records in his "Story of the Great March" —and he penned the words almost as the incidents were happening—that the Union soldiers worked nobly, removing household belongings from the dwellings which were in the track of the approaching flames, and here and there extinguishing a fire when there was hope of saving a structure. He adds that Sherman and his officers "worked with their own hands" until long after midnight, trying to save life and property. "The house taken for headquarters is now filled with old men, women, and children who have been driven from their homes by a more pitiless enemy than the detested 'Yankees.' Various causes are assigned to explain the origin of the fire. I am quite sure that it originated in sparks flying from the hundreds of bales

of cotton which the rebels had placed along the middle of the main street, and fired as they left the city. . . . There were fires, however, which must have been started independent of the above-named cause. The source of these is ascribed to the desire for revenge from some two hundred of our prisoners, who had escaped from the cars as they were being conveyed from this city to Charlotte, and, with the memories of long sufferings in the miserable pens I visited yesterday on the other side of the river, sought this means of retaliation. Again it is said that the soldiers who first entered the town, intoxicated with success and a liberal supply of bad liquor, which was freely distributed among them by designing citizens, in an insanity of exhilaration set fire to unoccupied houses."

No one can say now what was the exact measure of license and intentional disorder on the night of the fire. Naturally, the mischief was minimized by the Northerners and, no less naturally, greatly exaggerated by the Southerners, who were now all the more disposed to regard Sherman as a brute. But we can well hold him guiltless in the premises. The evidence is in his favor. And the subsequent decision of the Mixed Commission on American and British Claims, concerning cotton then destroyed at Columbia, relieved Sherman's army of all official responsibility for the general fire.

In this connection the following excerpt from Sherman's testimony before the Mixed Commission may be apropos, as well as interesting :

Question: "General Sherman, it is alleged that Von Moltke said your army was an armed mob?"

Answer: "Von Moltke was never fool enough to say that. I have seen Von Moltke in person; I did not ask him the question, because I did not presume that he was such an ass as to say that. . . . The Prussian army learned many a lesson, and profited by them, from our war, and their officers were prompt to acknowledge it."

Question: "General, I have often heard your enemies in the South admit the perfect discipline of your army?"

Answer: "We could not have done what we did do, unless we had kept them under good discipline."

Question: "Can you tell me anything about the Fifteenth Corps?"

Answer: "Yes, indeed I can. I know all about it; they were as fine a body of men as ever trod shoe leather."

Question: "They had the reputation of doing their work well?"

Answer: "Yes, thoroughly."

Question: "Had they not a reputation for leaving their mark upon the country?"

Answer: "Yes; they left their marks wherever they went."

Question: "You were aware of this?"

Answer: "Perfectly."

Question: "They were a wild set, were they not?"

Answer: "No, sir; they were composed of first-rate men—farmers and mechanics, men who are to-day as good citizens as we have in our country, but who went to war in earnest. They were mostly western men."

Question: "They were good men for destroying property?"

Answer: "Yes; when told to do so, they destroyed it very quickly."

Question: "When not told to do so, if they thought they might do it, and if not objectionable to their officers ——"

Answer: "They could do their work very thoroughly when they undertook it."

Question: "Were they in the habit of destroying property?"

Answer: "No; I do not think they were, more than was necessary. They were a very kind set of men, and I have known them frequently to share their rations with citizens and people along the country; I have often seen it done."

Question: "Do you mean to say that you were not aware that the Fifteenth Corps was a corps distinguished for the marks they left upon the country through which they passed?"

Answer: "I may have known it, and very likely I did; I generally knew what was going on."

. . . . . .

Question: "Do you not believe that individ-

uals assisted in spreading the conflagration at Columbia?"

Answer: "My own judgment was that the fire originated from the imprudent act of Wade Hampton in ripping open the bales of cotton, piling it in the streets, burning it, and then going away. . . . Some soldiers, after the fire originated, may have been concerned in spreading it, but not concerned at all in starting it."

The morning sun of the 18th of February had risen brightly over ruined Columbia. On the same day Charleston was evacuated by General Hardee, who found the latter city of no further strategic value, and hoped to make himself more useful in the field. Four days later Wilmington, N. C., was captured by General Terry. Sherman, who was already continuing on his march northward to Goldsboro, was well pleased with the results of the campaign thus far. It was evident, indeed, that the end was near. In the meantime Charleston was taken possession of by a brigade of General Foster's troops, while General Hardee had retreated eastward, across the Pedee River.

Sherman now began to experience some strong opposition to his progress. At Cheraw the Confederates concentrated under Hardee (who had with him the soldiers previously in garrison at Charleston), in an effort to stem the Union advance, but they were out-manœuvred and obliged to evacuate the place. Sherman found Cheraw full of supplies, including a large quantity of Madeira

which the general (no mean authority) considered the finest he had ever tasted. General Kilpatrick and his cavalry, operating on the outskirts of the marching army, were given plenty to do, too, by Hampton's cavalry. On one occasion Kilpatrick had divided his force into two parts, occupying roads behind the Twentieth Corps, and interposing between the infantry of Sherman and Hampton's horse. Hampton broke across this line, and actually captured the house wherein General Kilpatrick was taking temporary shelter. The latter and most of his men made for a neighboring swamp, where they reorganized their demoralized forces, and, returning, drove off Hampton's party. However, the enterprising Confederate took with him Kilpatrick's private horses and several hundred prisoners, and the Union cavalry general was thus warned to be more prudent in future.[1]

It was in Cheraw, in the very house that General Hardee had occupied, that Sherman came across a fairly recent copy of the New York *Tribune*. He read it, of course, and found it to contain one item of news which he considered "extremely mischievous"—an announcement that General Sherman would next be heard from about Goldsboro, because his supply-vessels from Savannah were rendezvousing at Morehead City (on the North

[1] Sherman seems to have had, even after the war, a particular aversion for Wade Hampton, whom he calls, in his "Memoirs," "a braggart." But Hampton deserves a better name—that of a gallant fighter. It is a name that Sherman if now living, would, doubtless, give to the dead "cavalry Crichton."

Carolina coast, southeast of Goldsboro). There are times when the truth is unwelcome, as Sherman now felt, since he realized that this number of the *Tribune* must have been in Hardee's hands. It is safe to infer that he indulged in his usual strong terms against war correspondents, for he says: "Up to that moment I had endeavored so to feign to our left that we had completely misled our antagonists; but this was no longer possible, and I concluded that we must be ready for the concentration in our front of all the forces subject to General Joseph Johnston's orders, for I was there also informed that he had been restored to the full command of the Confederate forces in South and North Carolina."

Sherman's information was quite correct. The much criticised Johnston, whose Fabian policy had called forth the condemnation of Jefferson Davis, had been assigned by General Lee to command the Confederate troops (probably numbering 26,000 in all), available for opposition in front of Sherman. It was a sort of vindication for the deposed general, but it came too late.

Johnston, speaking of the new assignment (which was made whilst he was quietly living in Lincolnton, N. C.), says his orders from Lee were to "concentrate all available forces, and drive back Sherman." Before assuming command he visited General Beauregard, whose headquarters were at Charlotte, and found that the latter was much pleased at the selection of Johnston for this work,

—none the less so on account of the feeble state of his own health. "He also," adds Johnston, "gave me a copy of a despatch that he had addressed to General Lee the day before, in which the same feeling was expressed. I therefore accepted the command, confident of the same loyal and cordial support from that distinguished officer, in the final operations of the war, that he had given me at its commencement. This was done with a full consciousness on my part, however, that we could have no other object in continuing the war than to obtain fair terms of peace; for the Southern cause must have appeared hopeless then to all intelligent and dispassionate Southern men. I therefore resumed the duties of my military grade with no hope beyond that of contributing to obtain peace on such conditions as, under the circumstances, ought to satisfy the Southern people and their government."

Johnston bravely took up a thankless burden. Sherman, moving forward, as his army broke railroads and foraged on the country, reached Fayetteville, N. C., on the 11th of March. Here he wrote several important letters which must have given joy to the recipients. To the secretary of war, he said—"I have done all that I proposed, and the fruits seem to me ample for the time employed. Charleston, Georgetown, and Wilmington are incidents, while the utter demolition of the railroad system of South Carolina, and the utter destruction of the enemy's arsenals of Columbia,

Cheraw, and Fayetteville, are the principals of the movement. These points were regarded as inaccessible to us, and now no place in the Confederacy is safe against the army of the west. Let Lee hold on to Richmond, and we will destroy his country; and then of what use is Richmond? He must come out and fight us on open ground, and for that we must ever be ready. Let him stick behind his parapet, and he will perish. . . . My army is as united and cheerful as ever, and as full of confidence in itself and its leaders."

To Grant Sherman wrote, among other things: "We have had foul weather, and roads that would have stopped travel to almost any other body of men I ever heard of. Our march was substantially what I designed—straight to Columbia, feigning on Branchville and Augusta. . . . I could leave here to-morrow, but want to clear my columns of the vast crowd of refugees and negroes that encumber us. Some I will send down the river in boats, and the rest to Wilmington by land, under small escort, as soon as we are across Cape Fear River. I hope you have not been uneasy about us, and that the fruits of this march have been appreciated. . . . If I can now add Goldsboro without too much cost, I will be in a position to aid you materially in the spring campaign. Joseph Johnston may try to interpose between me here and Schofield about Newbern; but I think he will not try that, but concentrate his scattered armies at Raleigh, and I will go straight at him as soon as I get our men re-

clothed and our wagons reloaded. . . . I expect to make a junction with Schofield in ten days."

To reach Goldsboro, where the junction with Schofield was to be effected, so that the last play in the game of war might be made, was Sherman's next ambition. "I knew," he says, "that my special antagonist, General Johnston, was back, with part of his old army ; that he would not be misled by feints and false reports, and would somehow compel me to exercise more caution than I had hitherto done."

How sincere an admirer of Johnston, even amid the din of war, General Sherman always was ! The latter was determined to give the Confederate leader as little time for reorganization as possible, and so crossed Cape Fear River, with his army, on the 13th and 14th of March.

Hardee's forces, infantry and cavalry, were now offering stubborn resistance to the invaders. On the 16th he was in a good position near Averysboro, before which General Slocum, commanding the left wing of the Union army, deployed a portion of the troops of the Twentieth Corps. Kilpatrick was on the right front with the cavalry. Sherman, coming up at this time, gave an important order. "Let a brigade make a wide circuit by the left," he said, "and catch this line in flank !" The movement met with success; the first line of the enemy was swept away, and Sherman captured over two hundred men and Captain Macbeth's battery of three

guns. Hardee now retreated toward Smithfield. Among the Confederate wounded was a "pale, handsome young man," whose left arm, when Sherman visited the improvised hospital, had just been cut off near the shoulder. He spoke to the general in a feeble voice, announcing himself as Captain Macbeth, and saying he remembered Sherman when the latter used to visit the house of his father, in Charleston. It is needless to add that the young Southern officer received every attention. After the war Sherman had the pleasure of renewing his acquaintance with the captain, in St. Louis, under less painful circumstances.

From Averysboro the left wing of the advancing army turned eastward, in the direction of Goldsboro. Sherman remained with this wing until the night of the 18th, when, within twenty-seven miles of Goldsboro, and five of Bentonsville, he crossed over to join Howard, of the right wing. He fondly supposed that all dangerous opposition was now past. But for once he reckoned badly. The next day he received a message which told him that near Bentonsville Slocum and his left wing had unexpectedly come upon "Johnston's whole army!" Johnston, indeed, knowing that Sherman's forces were fairly well separated, and hoping to strike him a hard blow before he could make junction with Schofield, had concentrated all his forces at Bentonsville.

Sherman sent word to Slocum to make a "defensive" fight, to save time, until he himself should

arrive with reinforcements. Troops were at once turned toward Slocum, as the booming of cannon, unpleasantly loud, came from the direction of Bentonsville. Then ensued the spirited actions of the 19th and 20th, wherein the Confederates and Slocum's left wing fought each other with conspicuous gallantry, not to say, ferocity; and the Northern troops several times were engaged on opposite sides of the same breastworks, "so completely were they surrounded by the Confederates." But the invaders held their ground; reinforcements finally reached Slocum, and Johnston was forced to retire. He found no further chance to inflict mischief on his foes. According to his own estimate, his loss aggregated about 2,350, including killed, wounded and missing, while the Union loss was 1,600 in all. Sherman afterward thought that he had made a mistake in not trying to overwhelm Johnston's whole army—whose numbers he had overestimated. But he was content then to let the Confederate general go, while he himself pushed on to Goldsboro, which he soon reached, with his entire force (March 23d and 24th), and formed the desired junction with Terry and Schofield.

Thus, as Sherman himself says with honest pride, was concluded "one of the longest and most important marches ever made by an organized army in a civilized country." The distance from Savannah as it was marched, was over four hundred miles, and the route traversed was hampered by swamps, rivers and muddy roads which were often

worse than no roads. Columbia, Cheraw and Fayetteville, with their munitions and supplies, had been captured along the march; a vast amount of food and forage of value to the enemy had been consumed; the railroads had been broken up; the evacuation of Charleston and her harbor had been indirectly effected. And yet the army arrived in Goldsboro in "superb order," believing more firmly than ever in "Uncle Billy."

## CHAPTER XI

### ENDING THE WAR

THE *finale* of the war was now but a few days in the distance. Sherman, in his march, had "drawn a line of steel from the Appalachians to the Atlantic"; Sheridan had made a brilliant raid north of the James River in Virginia; and Grant, with a force of one hundred and twenty-five thousand men, was threatening the undaunted but doomed Lee, who defended the approaches to Richmond and Petersburg. With the coming of success the North had regained her old-time enthusiasm for the war; the South was bleeding, sore, dispirited, tired. The "rebels" had fought with a courage that did honor to American manhood, and called forth the admiration of their opponents. We speak of the admiration of the opponents who fought against them, not of stay-at-home bigots who called all Confederates "cowardly traitors." But bravery could do no more. The North, no less brave, had triumphed, fortunately for the whole Union; and the time was to come, after designing politicians had ceased to wave the "bloody shirt," when there would be a country united in fact as well as in theory. [1]

[1] "The population of the South was growing tired of the manner in which the politicians were conducting the war. . . . Only the despairing courage of the leaders remained, and their dwindling retinue. The means of carrying on the struggle had been exhausted."—"Bird's Eye View of our Civil War."

Though the end of the contest was apparently in view, there was still some important work to be done. After his arrival at Goldsboro Sherman determined to go in person to City Point, where he could have an interview with General Grant. So, leaving General Schofield in chief command, he started northward on a locomotive; then took a steamer at Morehead City, sailed along the coast to Fortress Monroe, and from there up the James River to City Point. Here, on the afternoon of March 27th, Sherman found Grant, with his family and staff, occupying a "pretty group of huts," on the banks of the river, and, of course, was most cordially received. After an interview lasting for more than an hour, Grant casually remarked that President Lincoln was then on board the River Queen, a steamer lying at the City Point wharf, and proposed that they should call upon him. This they did; Lincoln was delighted to see Sherman; conversed with him freely about the Atlanta and Carolina campaigns, and the "march to the sea;" and, with his keen sense of humor ever to the fore, wished to know all about the peculiarities, makeshifts and whims of the famous "bummers." He was somewhat disturbed, however, by the idea that some accident might happen to Sherman's army while the general was away. The latter explained to him that the army was "snug and comfortable," collecting food and supplies for the farther march northward; and that General Schofield was in every way competent to command in his own absence, hearing which Lincoln seemed to be relieved.

When they returned to Grant's headquarters, and had taken afternoon tea with Mrs. Grant, that lady asked: "And did you see *Mrs.* Lincoln?" "Why no," said Grant; "I did not ask for her." "I didn't even know she was on board," added Sherman. "Well, you *are* a pretty pair," cried Mrs. Grant; "your neglect was unpardonable!"

The next morning Grant and Sherman, accompanied by Admiral Porter, called upon Mr. and *Mrs.* Lincoln on the River Queen. The latter "begged to be excused," but the President received them as pleasantly as before. Grant explained how he was closing in upon Lee, and Sherman told Lincoln that his own army, at Goldsboro, was strong enough to fight Lee's and Johnston's armies combined, "provided General Grant could come up within a day or so," etc.

Lincoln said, more than once, "there has been blood enough shed already," and inquired if it were not possible to avoid another battle. "We can't control that event," answered Sherman. "That necessarily rests with the enemy." He then asked the President if he "was all ready for the end of the war"; if he knew "what was to be done with the rebel armies when defeated"; and what was to be the fate of Jefferson Davis and his colleagues. Lincoln answered that he was "all ready" for the close of the contest, and anxious to see the Confederate soldiers back at home, and at work. As to Mr. Davis he intimated that if the Confederate President would leave the country "unbeknown" to him—

the expression was used in one of his apropos stories —he would be relieved from an embarrassing situation.[1]

Sherman says—and his very words should be quoted: "He [Lincoln] distinctly authorized me to assure Governor Vance and the people of North Carolina that as soon as the rebel armies laid down their arms, and resumed their civil pursuits, they would at once be guaranteed all their rights as citizens of a common country, and that to avoid anarchy the state governments then in existence, with their civil functionaries, would be recognized by him as the government *de facto* till Congress could provide others." Sherman, who never saw the President again, parted from him with the idea that Lincoln desired to have the war ended as soon as possible; "to restore all the men of both sections to their homes"; and to behold once again a peaceful, reunited country. And we can quite believe that Lincoln, who had neither malice nor a petty spirit of triumph in his nature, was ready to bind up the gaping wounds of the South, and to act—as he would have acted had he lived—the part of the Great Reconciler.

In view of future events, it is well to note what the two witnesses of this now historic interview between Lincoln and Sherman afterward said about it. Grant in his "Personal Memoirs," records that "General Sherman had met Mr. Lincoln at City Point . . . and knew what Mr. Lincoln had said

[1] See Oberholtzer's "Abraham Lincoln," in the American Crisis Series.

to the Peace Commissioners when he met them at Hampton Roads, viz. : that before he could enter into negotiations with them they would have to agree to two points : one being that the Union should be preserved, and the other that slavery should be abolished, and if they were ready to concede these two points he was almost ready to sign his name to a blank piece of paper, and permit them to fill out the balance of the terms upon which we would live together." [1]

It is safe to infer from the above, although Grant does not actually say so, that Mr. Lincoln had expressed practically the same views to General Sherman as he had done in the presence of Messrs. Stephens, Campbell and Hunter.

What Admiral Porter has to note of the interview (written a year after it occurred, and dated at the Annapolis Naval Academy) is much more detailed, although no stronger, perhaps, in the way of inference. The admiral says in his statement that he took notes of the meeting at the time, and is glad he did so, owing to what subsequently occurred—Joseph Johnston's surrender to Sherman, and "Stanton's ill-conduct" toward the latter, which "tended to cast odium" on him for allowing "such liberal terms to Johnston." And in the account that follows Porter writes—we give only a portion of his statement—that in his opinion "Mr. Lincoln came

[1] This Hampton Roads Conference, which proved useless, had taken place early in February, when the Southern "Peace Commissioners" were Alexander H. Stephens, Judge Campbell, and R. M. T. Hunter.

down to City Point with the most liberal views toward the rebels. He felt confident that we would be successful, and was *willing that the enemy should capitulate on the most favorable terms.* . . . He wanted peace on almost any terms, and there is no knowing what proposals he might have been willing to listen to. His heart was tenderness throughout, and, as long as the rebels laid down their arms, he did not care how it was done. I do not know how far he was influenced by General Grant, but I presume, from their long conferences, that they must have understood each other perfectly, and that the terms given to Lee after his surrender were authorized by Mr. Lincoln. . . . Indeed, the President more than once told me what he supposed the terms would be: if Lee and Johnston surrendered, he considered the war ended, and that all the other rebel forces would lay down their arms at once.

. . . . . .

"After hearing General Sherman's account of his own position, and that of Johnston, at that time, the President expressed fears that the rebel general would escape south again by the railroads, and that General Sherman would have to chase him anew, over the same ground; but the general [Sherman] pronounced this to be impracticable. He remarked, 'I have him where he cannot move without breaking up his army, which, once disbanded, can never again be got together; and I have destroyed the Southern railroads, so that they cannot be used again for a long time.' General Grant remarked, 'What

is to prevent their laying the rails again?' 'Why,' said General Sherman, 'my *bummers* don't do things by halves. Every rail, after having been placed over a hot fire, has been twisted as crooked as a ram's horn, and they never can be used again.'

. . . . . .

"The conversation between the President and General Sherman about the terms of surrender to be allowed Joseph Johnston, continued. Sherman energetically insisted that he could command his own terms, and that Johnston would have to yield to his demands; *but the President was very decided about the matter*, and insisted that the surrender of Johnston's army must be obtained on any terms. . . . Sherman, as a subordinate officer, yielded his views to those of the President, and the terms of capitulation between himself and Johnston were exactly in accordance with Mr. Lincoln's wishes. *He could not have done anything which would have pleased the President better.*

"Mr. Lincoln did, in fact, arrange the (so considered) liberal terms offered General Joseph Johnston, and, whatever may have been General Sherman's private views, I feel sure that he yielded to the wishes of the President, in every respect. It was Mr. Lincoln's policy that was carried out, and, had he lived long enough, he would have been but too glad to have acknowledged it. Had Mr. Lincoln lived, Secretary Stanton would have issued no false telegraphic dispatches, in the hope of killing off another general in the regular army—one who by his

success had placed himself in the way of his own succession."

But we are anticipating. Let us chronicle that General Sherman was back at Goldsboro on the evening of the 30th of March, and at once began the reorganization and the revictualing of his army, so as to continue the march northward. It was then thought that he might be obliged to give one great battle to the combined forces of Lee and Johnston. A few days later the glad news reached Goldsboro that both Richmond and Petersburg had fallen (April 2d and 3d). Lee had retreated, and with his tired, hungry forces, was hurrying along toward the Danville Railroad, hoping that he might form a junction with Johnston, whose army was known to be at Smithfield, on Sherman's front. Then there came a cipher telegram to the latter from Grant, dated April 5th. "All indications now are," he said, "that Lee will attempt to reach Danville with the remnant of his force. . . . I will push on to Burkesville, and, if a stand is made at Danville, will, in a very few days, go there. If you can possibly do so, push on from where you are, and let us see if we cannot finish the job with Lee's and Johnston's armies."

The 10th of April found Sherman, with his army, on the move northward; the next day he was in Smithfield. But there was no Johnston; he had retreated quickly. On the morning of the 13th, Sherman entered Raleigh. The whole situation had changed wonderfully within a few hours. After

leaving Smithfield the general received a message from Grant, at Appomattox, announcing that Lee had surrendered his whole army. Sherman knew that the war was now over—unless Johnston should prolong it by resorting to "guerilla" tactics —and he issued a jubilant special field order. "Glory to God and our country, and all honor to our comrades in arms, toward whom we are marching," he said. "A little more labor, a little more toil on our part, the great race is won, and our government stands regenerated, after four long years of war."

While at Raleigh, Sherman received a welcome letter from General Johnston.[1] "The results of the recent campaign in Virginia," he wrote from Greensboro, "have changed the relative military condition of the belligerents. I am, therefore, induced to address you in this form the inquiry whether, to stop the further effusion of blood and devastation of property, you are willing to make a temporary suspension of active operations and to communicate to Lieutenant-General Grant, commanding the armies of the United States, the request that he will take like action in regard to other armies, the object being to permit the civil authorities to enter into the needful arrangements to terminate the existing war."

When General Johnston had heard of Lee's surrender he admitted, in a conversation with General Beauregard, that the Southern Confederacy was

[1] Dated April 13th.

overthrown. Afterward, in an interview with Jefferson Davis and members of his cabinet, held at Greensboro, Johnston represented that the sources of the Confederacy were exhausted, so far as prosecuting the contest any farther was concerned, and urged Mr. Davis to exercise at once "the only function of government still in his possession"— that of opening negotiations for peace. The others present were then desired by the Confederate President to express their opinions. "General Breckenridge, Mr. Mallory, and Mr. Reagan, thought that the war was decided against us; and that it was absolutely necessary to make peace. Mr. Benjamin expressed the contrary opinion. The latter made a speech for war, much like that of Sempronius in Addison's 'Cato.'" [1] And the result was that Jefferson Davis consented, although most unwillingly, to Johnston's opening negotiations with General Sherman.

Davis was an irreconcilable to the bitter end of the struggle. Even at this interview, and later, he cherished a hope that the war was not over. He says, speaking of this crisis: "I had reason to believe that the spirit of the army in North Carolina was unbroken, for, though surrounded by circumstances well calculated to depress and discourage them, I had learned that they earnestly protested to their officers against the surrender which rumor informed them was then in contemplation. If any shall deem it a weak cre-

[1] Johnston, "Narrative of Military Operations."

dulity to confide in such reports, something may be allowed to an intense love for the Confederacy, to a thorough conviction that its fall would involve ruin, both material and moral, and to a confidence in the righteousness of our cause, which, if equally felt by my compatriots, would make them do and dare to the last extremity." Davis also labored under the hallucination that many members of the Army of Northern Virginia would, if called upon, gladly return to the fray.[1]

But Johnston knew, as Jefferson Davis did not, or would not know, that the South was exhausted, ruined, and could not, even if she would, continue the war. We cannot help admiring Davis for his dislike to admit that he was beaten, yet Johnston and Lee, who shrank from causing the South any more useless bloodshed, and who were willing to bury all their hopes and personal ambitions, are to-day much more heroic and attractive figures than the unreasoning President of the Confederacy.

When Sherman received Johnston's letter he immediately replied (April 14th), that he was ready to confer as to a suspension of hostilities. He agreed to "abide by the same terms and conditions" as were made by Generals Grant and Lee at Appomattox Court House, and, furthermore, to suspend the movement of any troops from the direction of Virginia. Three days later, when Sherman was starting out to meet Johnston at a

[1] "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II, p. 680.

point midway between the Union advance at Durham and the Confederate rear at Hillsboro, he received a dispatch in cipher announcing the assassination of Lincoln at Ford's Theatre, Washington, on the evening of the 14th of April. Dreading the effect that the news might have on the army he kept the gruesome telegram secret until his return to Raleigh in the afternoon. He feared that the soldiers, maddened by the thought of the murder, might try to retaliate upon the innocent inhabitants of the city. When he finally announced Lincoln's death, he was pleased that the sorrow over it did not lead to a spirit of revenge—for he felt that one single word of his would have laid the city in ashes, and "turned its whole population houseless upon the country, if not worse." Thus Sherman, with the telegram securely hidden in his pocket, started out to meet his antagonist. He little realized how his own negotiations with Johnston would be marred by the death of the man whom he had seen, so recently, filled with a sort of pity for the stricken South, and animated by the highest hopes of reconciliation. Sherman himself had not much of this sentiment, as we know, but he remembered the words of the late President, and resolved, perhaps not with worldly wisdom, to carry out the Lincoln policy.

Sherman and Johnston held their first conference in a farmhouse. One would dearly love to have seen these two veterans as they confronted each other,—the first a conqueror, but unassuming; the

second the conquered, yet making a manly front to the end. Colonel Nichols, who accompanied Sherman to the rendezvous, speaks of meeting Wade Hampton, who had a beard "unnaturally black" and describes General Johnston as a man of striking appearance. He was dressed "in a neat, gray uniform, which harmonized gracefully with a full beard and mustache of silvery whiteness, partly concealing a genial and generous mouth, that must have become habituated to a kindly smile. His eyes, dark brown in color, varied in expression—now intense and sparkling, and then soft with tenderness, or twinkling with humor. . . . The general cast of the features gave an expression of goodness and manliness, mingling a fine nature with the decision and energy of the capable soldier." [1]

Captain George W. Pepper, another eye witness of this meeting between the two commanders, speaks of Johnston as "venerable, with intermingled gray, in close-cropped hair and beard." He lifted his hat continually to the officers in blue, "who admired his military bearing, with coat closely buttoned to his chin." But he adds: "For my part I thought our own chieftain [Sherman] ugly as he is called, a far better looking man, taller, younger, and more commanding."

As soon as Sherman and Johnston were alone, the former showed the Confederate the despatch announcing Lincoln's assassination. "The perspiration came out in large drops on his forehead,"

[1] "The Story of the Great March."

records Sherman, "and he did not attempt to conceal his distress." He denounced the act as "a disgrace to the age," and hoped his rival did not "charge it to the Confederate government."[1] Sherman answered that he felt sure neither Johnston nor Lee, nor the officers generally of the Confederate army could be privy to such an act, but that he could not say as much for Jefferson Davis and "men of that stripe." Sherman, of course, had no right to cast any suspicion upon Davis, but at that time there was a disposition (not altogether confined to the North, be it noted) to ascribe all the woes of the country to the unsuccessful head of the Confederacy.

This conference, in which Johnston frankly admitted that any further fighting would be "murder," was followed by another interview between the generals, held the next day. Then Johnston assured Sherman that he had obtained authority over all the Confederate armies still in the field—these included Taylor's forces in Louisiana and Texas, and certain other troops in Alabama and Georgia—and that they would "obey his orders to surrender on the same terms as his own." He argued that the Confederates, if they made peace, should be given some definite assurance of their "political rights" after their surrender. Later General Breckinridge joined the conference (after the Union general had stipulated that he was to be admitted as a Confederate officer, not as the Confederate secretary of war),

[1] "Memoirs of General William T. Sherman," Vol. II, p. 349.

and he likewise touched upon the uneasiness of the Southern soldiers as to their "political rights," in case of surrender.

Already, at the first interview, when Sherman had offered him the same terms as those given by Grant to General Lee, Johnston had expressed the hope that something more could be secured. "I suggested . . . that, instead of a partial suspension of hostilities," relates Johnston, "we might, as other generals had done, arrange the terms of a permanent peace, and among other precedents reminded him of the preliminaries of Leoben, and the terms in which Napoleon, then victorious, proposed negotiation to the Archduke Charles; and the sentiment he expressed that the civic crown earned by preserving the life of one citizen confers truer glory than the highest achievements merely military." Sherman replied (so Johnston adds), that he was anxious to end the war and restore the Union, and spoke of his recent interview with Mr. Lincoln.

At the second conference with Johnston, Breckinridge seems to have dwelt upon this civil phase of the proposed surrender with an eloquence and plausibility that deeply impressed Sherman. Indeed, the contention of Johnston that the "political rights" of the Confederates should be observed seems to fall in with Lincoln's idea that, once the Union was recognized and slavery abolished, everything should be done to conciliate the South, and induce the people to resume the pursuits of peace.

Thus, with the wishes of Lincoln in his mind,[1] and intending to be as true to his country as man could be, Sherman (neither noting the bitterness engendered in the North by Lincoln's murder, nor realizing that his new masters, Andrew Johnson and Edwin M. Stanton, were not persons of "sweetness and light"), quickly drew up a "Memorandum," or "Basis of Agreement," which was designed to end the war. This "Agreement," which Johnston and Sherman thereupon signed, read as follows:

"(1) The contending armies now in the field to maintain the *status quo* until notice is given by the commanding general of any one to its opponent, and reasonable time—say, forty-eight hours—allowed.

"(2) The Confederate armies now in existence to be disbanded and conducted to their several state capitals, there to deposit their arms and public property in the state arsenal; and each officer and man to execute and file an agreement to cease from acts of war, and to abide the action of the state and Federal authority. . . .

"(3) The recognition, by the Executive of the United States, of the several state governments, on their officers and legislatures taking the oaths prescribed by the Constitution of the United States; and, where conflicting state governments have re-

[1] "There were many theories on the subject [of reconstruction], which were advocated with great vehemence and passion. Mr. Lincoln did not adopt any particular theory as to any one mode by which the national authority could be restored. . . . He was no mere theorist, but a practical statesman, looking ever for the wisest means to secure the end."—*Isaac N. Arnold.*

sulted from the war, the legitimacy of all shall be submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States.

"(4) The re-establishment of all the Federal courts in the several states, with powers as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the states respectively.

"(5) The people and inhabitants of all the states to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive can, their political rights and franchises, as well as their rights of person and property, as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the states respectively.

"(6) The Executive authority of the government of the United States not to disturb any of the people by reason of the late war, so long as they live in peace and quiet, abstain from acts of armed hostility, and obey the laws in existence at the place of their residence.

"(7) In general terms,—the war to cease; a general amnesty, so far as the Executive of the United States can command, on condition of the disbandment of the Confederate armies, the distribution of the arms, and the resumption of peaceful pursuits by the officers and men hitherto composing said armies.

"Not being fully empowered by our respective principals to fulfil these terms, we individually and officially pledge ourselves to promptly obtain the necessary authority, and to carry out the above programme."

It must be admitted that the provisions of this

"Agreement" were pretty wide in scope, from a political and "reconstruction" view-point, and that they went farther than was wise into civic matters. Sherman was an astute soldier; not an astute statesman. Still, the "Agreement" was drawn up by him in all honesty and sincerity, and it was stipulated that it must be submitted for approval, so far as the North was concerned, to the leaders of the administration in Washington.

But the administration promptly disapproved the "Agreement" when it was referred to it through General Grant. Andrew Johnson and Mr. Stanton were in no mood for conciliation; they were, on the contrary, in a vindictive frame of mind, and they believed, honestly enough, that Sherman had exceeded his authority by dealing with the civic consequences of surrender. Even General Grant, ever friendly to Sherman, wrote to him after reading the terms, that he hardly believed it possible that they could be approved when he should forward them to Washington.

The "Agreement" was rejected on the following grounds:

First: That it was an exercise of authority not vested in General Sherman, and on its face showed that both he and Johnston knew that Sherman had no authority to enter into any such arrangement.

Second: That it was an acknowledgment of the "rebel government."

Third: It was understood to re-establish Confederate state governments that had been overthrown,

and placed arms in the hands of the Confederates, at their respective capitals, "which might be used as soon as the armies of the United States were disbanded, and to conquer and subdue loyal states."

Fourth: By the restoration of the Confederate authority in their respective states, the Confederates would be enabled to re-establish slavery.

Fifth: It might furnish a ground of responsibility, by the Federal government, to pay the Confederate debt, and "subject loyal citizens of the rebel states to debts contracted by rebels in the name of the states."

Sixth: It put in dispute the existence of loyal state governments, and the new state of West Virginia, which had been recognized by every department of the United States government.

Seventh: It practically abolished the confiscation laws, and "relieved rebels of every degree, who had slaughtered our people, from all pains and penalties for their crimes."

Eighth: It gave terms that had been "deliberately, repeatedly, and solemnly rejected by President Lincoln," and "better terms than the rebels had ever asked in their most prosperous condition."

Ninth: It formed no basis of true and lasting peace, "but relieved the rebels from the pressure of our victories, and left them in condition to renew their efforts to overthrow the United States government, and subdue the loyal states, whenever their strength was recruited, and any opportunity should offer."

If we view these objections in an impartial spirit we are struck with the mixture of common sense and vindictive nonsense which they exhibit. It was fair to assume, for instance, that the "Agreement" might be stretched, or distorted, at some future day into a ground of responsibility for Confederate debts. But it was seeking trouble to suppose that it might enable the Southerners to re-establish slavery, and it was savagely suggestive of Stanton to speak of our late opponents as guilty of "slaughter."

Of course the administration had a perfect right, and some reason, to disapprove the "Agreement." But Mr. Stanton had no right to disapprove it, as he did, in a manner that was brutally offensive to Sherman, and which indicated that he considered the general who had performed such wonders in Georgia as little better than a traitor or a criminal. With the arbitrary, cruel spirit that sometimes distinguished his treatment of friends as well as foes, the secretary of war at once sent to General Dix, who gave it to the newspapers, an announcement setting forth the rejection of the treaty ; showing the nine reasons of objection, as already stated ; insinuating that Sherman might connive at the escape of Jefferson Davis, loaded with "plunder," into Mexico or Europe ; and stating that General Grant had been sent to North Carolina to direct hostilities against Johnston. The paper, which was most insulting in its tone toward Sherman, also quoted, as a rebuke to him, the letter which Lincoln had sent

to Grant, more than a month before Lee's surrender, in Stanton's name. That letter, as we all remember, instructed Grant not to decide or confer upon any political questions. "Such questions the President holds in his own hands, and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions."

The quotation of this letter to Grant (which had been written on the 3d of March) seemed a trump card against Sherman. But the general aptly says, in his "Memoirs" that the publication of the bulletin was an outrage, since Stanton had failed to communicate to him in advance, as was his duty, the purpose of the administration to limit the negotiations to purely military matters; but, on the contrary, had authorized him, at Savannah, to control all matters, civil and military. "By this bulletin he implied that I had previously been furnished with a copy of his despatch of March 3d, to General Grant, which was not so; and he gave warrant to the impression, which was sown broadcast, that I might be bribed by banker's gold to permit Davis to escape."

Indeed, the administration seemed to have gone crazy on the subject of Sherman and his unfortunate "Agreement," and was quite ready to heap all manner of insult upon him. Halleck, his old friend, even went so far as to issue instructions that all orders from Sherman were to be disregarded, and a great many worthy people in the North, who had heretofore been engaged in singing the general's praises, now shook their heads and called him un-

complimentary names. Some of these people believed, particularly since the death of Lincoln, that even hanging was too good for the "miserable rebels"—a sentiment which Stanton doubtless shared with them. It was a bitter moment for Sherman, and though his unpopularity was but shortlived, and the cloud of suspicion which hung over him soon blew away, he could never forget the brutal treatment that he received at the hands of the Washington authorities, even if he did forgive the authors of it.[1]

"Some people," writes Grant, "went so far as to denounce him [Sherman] as a traitor—a most preposterous term to apply to a man who had rendered so much service as he had, even supposing he had made a mistake in granting such terms as he did to Johnston and his army. . . . But the feeling against Sherman died out very rapidly, and it was not many weeks before he was restored to the fullest confidence of the American people." Early in May John Sherman wrote to his distinguished brother that while the public had disapproved the general's "Agreement," yet the "gross and damnable perversion of many of the papers," and their arraignment of his motives, had been even more severely condemned. "For a time," says the senator, "you lost all the popularity gained by your achieve-

[1] "Mr. Stanton was deeply indignant at the general for meddling with matters beyond his jurisdiction. No doubt his indignation was intensified by his dislike of Sherman. The two men were antagonistic by nature."—Charles A. Dana, in "Recollections of the Civil War."

ments. But now the reaction has commenced, and you find some defenders; many more to denounce the base and malicious conduct of a gang of envious scamps, who seized upon this matter as a pretext for calumny. What to make of Stanton I don't know." The writer also observed: "The conduct of Grant is deserving of the highest praise. I shall always feel grateful to him."

Grant had, indeed, acted with the rarest delicacy and tact when sent down to North Carolina. He met Sherman at Raleigh, told him to effect a new agreement with Johnston, on the basis of Lee's surrender, and then got away as quickly as possible, so that his presence might not prove humiliating to Sherman. As a result the latter met Johnston again (April 26th) and the two signed a "military convention" devoid of the political phases of the rejected paper. The new agreement was simply this:

"(1) All acts of war on the part of the troops under General Johnston's command to cease from this date.

"(2) All arms and public property to be deposited at Greensboro, and delivered to an ordnance-officer of the United States army.

"(3) Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate. . . . Each officer and man to give his individual obligation in writing not to take up arms against the government of the United States, until properly released from this obligation.

"(4) The side-arms of officers, and their private horses and baggage, to be retained by them.

"(5) This being done, all the officers and men will be permitted to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by the United States authorities, so long as they observe their obligation and the laws in force where they may reside."

This convention, and certain "supplemental terms" made between Schofield and Johnston, to facilitate the return of the Confederate soldiers to their homes, were far different in scope from the wide privileges originally granted by Sherman. Thus closed the war: the South, shattered, bleeding, after a struggle unexampled in the history of the world for its bravery, prepared to bind up her wounds; the Union soldiers, like brave men, prepared to forget and forgive; the Northern politician prepared to send the receptive "carpet-bagger" into Dixie, and fasten upon her citizens the delights of negro suffrage, and "reconstruction."

Johnston and Sherman, who ever maintained for each other the highest admiration, took a friendly farewell. Johnston announced to the South that he had surrendered in order to spare the blood of his army, to prevent farther "devastation and ruin," and to "avoid the crime of waging a hopeless war." How much more graceful such an exit from the stage of the Confederacy than that of the man who hated him—Jefferson Davis!

Sherman now began the movement of his army to the North. By the 20th of May all his forces were

camped about Alexandria, Va. General Meade's Army of the Potomac had possession of the camps above, opposite Washington and Georgetown.

The war had been the grave of many military reputations; it also made a few soldiers famous for all time. And the greatest of these were Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and William Tecumseh Sherman.

## CHAPTER XII

### PEACEFUL DAYS

After reaching Alexandria General Sherman paid a visit to Washington, where he had a reception of the most cordial sort. The reaction in his favor had indeed set in; he was no longer called a traitor, or an "imbecilic tool" of Breckinridge and Joe Johnston; the North soon forgot his alleged indiscretion, and remembered only that he was one of the Titanic heroes of the war. Among those who welcomed the warrior most effusively was Andrew Johnson, who hastened to assure him that he had been entirely ignorant of Mr. Stanton's abusive "bulletin" until he had seen it in the papers. Different members of the cabinet made similar assurances; no one showed the least desire to shoulder any responsibility in the matter. The general, with his perennial sense of humor, no doubt laughed in his sleeve at this sudden desire to "come in out of the rain." But he did not laugh when he thought of Stanton, or of General Halleck, who had played into Stanton's hands during the "Agreement" episode. He had already declined proffers of reconciliation from Halleck, and he now sternly refused the good offices of General Grant to secure peace between himself and Stanton. "I have been publicly insulted," said Sherman, "and I shall

resent the insult as publicly." The secretary of war, on his part, made no advances, not being, as we know, a strong imbiber of the milk of human kindness. Indeed, it was said, that the uneven temper of the secretary had been made more acid than usual through fear that he was marked out for assassination. It is possible that his physical courage did not always keep pace with his moral courage —a virtue which he generally displayed to the point of boorishness.

Just at this time a grand review of the armies then near Washington was ordered. General Meade and the Army of the Potomac paraded before President Johnson and his cabinet on the 23d of May: the next morning Sherman's army made its never-to-be forgotten progress through the streets of the capital. The day was worthy of the occasion; the people, forgetful of the dead who had fallen —forgetful, for the nonce, even of Lincoln—were in gala mood. They were not unfaithful to those who had passed beyond, but they were resolved, at this great moment, to enjoy only the glory of the pageant. The avenues were packed with people; even the house-tops were black with spectators. At the head of the procession was General Sherman, accompanied by his staff. Clad in a resplendent uniform, he looked every inch the commander, and his charger's neck was covered with wreaths of flowers, placed there by admiring friends. Then came Howard, "his empty coat sleeve, pinned upon the breast, mutely proclaiming his deeds of courage."

After him rode Logan, "swarthy of complexion, with heavy black mustache, and eagle-eye, the image of a born soldier." Then followed Hazen, and Blair, and many more—but McPherson, Sherman's old friend, was there only in memory. He could only join those ghostly ranks immortalized in Bret Harte's "Last Review":

"And I saw a phantom army come
With never a sound of fife or drum,
But keeping time to a throbbing hum
Of wailing and lamentation;

. . . . . .

And so all night marched the nation's dead,
With never a banner above them spread,
Nor a badge, nor a motto brandished;
No mark—save the bare, uncovered head
Of the silent bronze Reviewer;
With never an arch save the vaulted sky;
With never a flower save those that lie
On the distant graves—for love could buy
No gift that was purer nor truer."

What a sight it must have been, this view of Sherman and his men! Already did they belong to history. "With heads erect and an air of indescribable *sang froid*, these men of the west stretched down Pennsylvania Avenue, with an easy, swinging gait, peculiar to themselves, acquired in long and rapid marches. They wore no holiday garb. The ragged and faded uniforms in which they had slept and marched, through the swamps of the Carolinas, still clung to their bodies, and

they strode along as if proud to display them as badges of faithful service."[1] How the spectators cheered them all, from Sherman down to the most valueless "bummer."

No one appreciated the beauty and significance of this review more than did Sherman himself. When he reached the Treasury Building, and looked behind him at the marching columns, he was impressed by the magnificence of the sight—the compactness of the lines, and the array of glittering muskets, which looked like a solid mass of steel, "moving with the regularity of a pendulum." The general, as he passed the house of Mr. Seward, who had come so near sharing the fate of Lincoln, saw and saluted the secretary of state, who sat at a window, feeble and swathed in bandages. Next he rode past the reviewing stand, saluting President Johnson; and soon, on dismounting, joined the party on the platform itself. In addition to Johnson there were on the stand General Grant, Mrs. Sherman, her father, Senator Ewing, Mr. Stanton, and many others. Sherman greeted each in turn, save the secretary of war. He relates that Stanton offered him his hand, but that he declined it publicly,—"and the fact was universally noticed."[2] But subsequently the two became recon-

[1] Hedley, "Marching Through Georgia."

[2] Charles A. Dana was on the reviewing stand on that day, in his capacity of assistant secretary of war. He naturally watched the meeting between Stanton and Sherman, and he takes issue with the general as to what happened. He says in his "Recollections," that Stanton made no motion to offer his

ciled: when Stanton was dying Sherman called at his home.

The general took his post on the stand at the left of the President, and stood for nearly seven hours whilst the army of which he had been so proud—an army soon to dissolve into an historical memory—marched past the White House grounds. His eyes glistened as he gazed on his comrades. It was, in his judgment, the most magnificent army in existence—not a mob. The world saw that it was an army in the proper sense, "well organized, well commanded and disciplined," and wondered not that it had "swept through the South like a tornado." If Sherman cared for triumph, and he was but human, he could never have asked for a fairer day than this. It was a glorious close to a glorious campaign. Not even the vindictive spirit of Stanton could deprive him of these fruits of victory.

A few days later Sherman issued "general orders" bidding farewell to his army. "The time has come for us to part," he wrote. He reviewed briefly the record of his campaigns, and then ended with the valedictory: "Your general now bids you farewell, with the full belief that, as in war you have been good soldiers, so in peace you will make good citizens; and if, unfortunately, new war should arise in our country, 'Sherman's army' will

hand, or exchange salutations in any manner. "As the general passed Mr. Stanton gave him merely a slight forward motion of the head, equivalent, perhaps, to a quarter of a bow."

be the first to buckle on its old armor, and come forth to defend and maintain the government of our inheritance."

William Tecumseh Sherman lived for a little more than a quarter of a century after the ending of the war. His autumnal years are not without interest of a certain kind, but they are curiously uneventful when compared with the startling color, the vivid picturesqueness, of the four years of conflict. This is but natural; when we dissociate the successful commander from the roar of battle, the boom of cannon, the midnight planning of a campaign within the dimly-lighted tent, we no longer find him the same heroic figure. The stage settings are wanting. We see our actor without the light, the tinsel, and scenic surroundings of the theatre.

Nevertheless, the last twenty-five years of Sherman's life were active, in a minor way, and quietly useful. After the passing of the grand review in Washington he spent a portion of the summer in Ohio, renewing friendships and talking over the events of the war, thence going to St. Louis to become commander of the "Military Division of the Mississippi." Under general orders issued June 27, 1865, the country had been divided into nineteen departments and five military divisions, and the "Division of the Mississippi" was to include the Departments of the Ohio, Missouri and Arkansas. To St. Louis he brought his family—he was anxious to "make their acquaintance," as he observed—and passed a very pleasant year, divided between the

routine of his office, study, inspection of posts, visits to Indian tribes, and other duties, and the preparation of the papers which were to supply materials for his "Memoirs," published a few years later.

He maintained the same independent spirit as before, seemed to have no greater belief than of yore in the politicians, and was not in favor of the move which has led to forty years of unnecessary mischief —that of extending the suffrage to the Southern negroes. He writes, for instance, to John Sherman, that "negro equality will lead to endless strife, and to remove and separate the races will be a big job; so any way we approach the subject it is full of difficulty. But it is better to study the case and adapt measures to it, than to lay down the theory or force facts to meet it." [1]

At this time, Sherman chafed terribly, as so nervous, and high-strung a man would, at the tendency in the War Department, to concentrate power in that department at the expense of the generals of the army. He protested now, as he did later, when he became commander of the whole army, against what General Force, in his biography of Sherman, well calls a system which "practically resulted in making the staff bureaus independent of the military head of the army, and allowing an adjutant-general, who might have the ambition to do so, to use the

[1] "General Sherman . . . never acknowledged allegiance to any party, and resented all appearance of such allegiance. He opposed universal suffrage, and believed that extending it to negroes was but adding to an existing evil."—Rachel Sherman Thorndike, in "The Sherman Letters."

whole power of the secretary of war and reduce the general-in-chief to a nullity."

Sherman soon found himself brought, most unwillingly, into contact with the really petty squabbles in which President Johnson and Stanton, and later General Grant, became the important, if not the altogether ideal, figures. He was now lieutenant-general, having succeeded Grant in that position upon the latter's appointment, in July, 1866, to be general of the army. These squabbles do not call for elaboration. How Johnson attempted to rid himself of Stanton, as secretary of war; how Stanton resisted and Congress intervened; how Grant refused to be made a "cat's paw" and would not accept the secretaryship for himself; how Johnson tried to send Grant on a mission to Mexico; how Grant, suspecting sinister political motives, would not be made to go—all these incidents are now familiar history. It is more to the point to record that Sherman wisely resisted any attempt to have himself put at the head of the army, and the head of the War Department, and in his friendship for Grant, went so far as to go himself on the scorned mission—that of escort to the newly appointed American minister to Mexico. That minister was Lewis D. Campbell, of Ohio, who was sent to acknowledge President Juarez, and thus diplomatically protest against the occupation of Mexico by the Emperor Maximilian.

Throughout all these troubles and "political nightmares"—troubles which show us the least

enviable phases of the history of our country—General Sherman kept a level head, despite his impetuosity and his habit of having opinions on every subject. Johnson, in his contests with Grant, and Stanton, and Congress, would have been very glad to use Sherman for his own purposes; but the latter was wise enough to keep, so far as he could, to the strict duties of his army work, and to remain faithful to Grant under all circumstances. Grant, to be sure, was never a perfect man, particularly after the war, when love of power and money began to seize hold upon his once unpretentious soul; but there was every reason why the two great generals should remain true to each other. When Sherman was appointed head of a commission empowered to hear the grievances of Indian tribes in conflict with the government, he threw his whole heart into the work, only too anxious, as he was, to escape the broils of so-called statesmanship. He visited these discontented tribes, and spoke to them, albeit in kindness, with the utmost frankness. The Indians were anxious to check the building of railroads, which frightened the buffalo herds; Sherman told them that they could not expect to stop emigration or the improvements of white men in the far west. He urged the Indians to accept reservations of land, to learn to farm and raise cattle, and to submit as gracefully as possible to the inevitable westward movement of the Caucasian's star of empire. "You cannot stop the locomotive any more than you can stop the sun or moon," he said. "You see for

yourselves that the white men are collecting in all directions in spite of all you can do. The white men are taking all the good land. If you don't choose your homes now, it will be too late next year."

The general was no hypocrite; he saw that the Indian was doomed on the American hemisphere, and he therefore held out to him no false hopes. And each year brings us nearer and nearer to the extinction, as a race, of the real owners of this continent. Sherman did what he could to relieve the situation—but that situation has always meant complete and unavoidable injustice to the Indian. The Anglo-Saxon may not be ethical, or sentimental, but he is always logical; he always fulfills the natural law by crowding an inferior race to the wall —or to the reservation. He has ever pressed hard against the red man, and he will never, in his heart, recognize the equality of the black man.

Disheartening as was this mission, yet it must have proved a pleasant contrast to the political conditions in which Sherman had so nearly become an actor. He had not forgotten the letters which he had written to President Johnson when the latter had planned to have him created a brevet general, and brought on to Washington. One of these letters (dated January 31, 1868), from which it is worth quoting had run, in part, as follows:

"*To the President:*

"Since our interview of yesterday I have given the subject of our conversation all my thoughts, and

I beg you will pardon my reducing the result to writing.

"My personal preferences, if expressed, were to be allowed to return to St. Louis to resume my present command; because my command was important, large, suited to my rank and inclination, and because my family was well provided for there, in house facilities, schools, living, and agreeable society.

"Whilst, on the other hand, Washington was for many (to me) good reasons highly objectionable. Especially because it is the political capital of the country and focus of intrigue, gossip and slander. Your personal preferences were, as expressed, to make a new department east, adequate to my rank, with headquarters at Washington, and to assign me to its command—to remove my family here, and to avail myself of its schools, etc.; to remove Mr. Stanton from his office as secretary of war, and have me to discharge the duties.

. . . . . .

"It has been the rule and custom of our army since the organization of the government that the second officer of the army should be at the second (in importance) command, and remote from general headquarters. To bring me to Washington would put three heads to an army,—yourself, General Grant, and myself,—and we would be more than human if we were not to differ. In my judgment it would ruin the army, and would be fatal to one or two of us.

"Generals Scott and Taylor proved themselves soldiers and patriots in the field, but Washington was fatal to both. . . . I have been with General Grant in the midst of death and slaughter—when the howls of people reached him after Shiloh; when messengers were speeding to and fro between his army and Washington, bearing slanders to induce his removal before he took Vicksburg; in Chattanooga, when the soldiers were stealing the corn of the starving mules to satisfy their own hunger; at Nashville, when he was ordered to the 'forlorn hope' to command the Army of the Potomac, so often defeated—and yet I never saw him more troubled than since he has been in Washington, and been compelled to read himself a 'sneak and deceiver' based on reports of four of the cabinet, and apparently with your knowledge. If this political atmosphere can disturb the equanimity of one so guarded, and so prudent, as he is, what will be the result with one so careless, so outspoken as I am? Therefore, with my consent, Washington never.

"As to the secretary of war, his office is twofold. As cabinet officer he should not be there without your hearty, cheerful consent, and I believe that is the judgment and opinion of every fair-minded man. As the holder of a civil office, having the supervision of monies appropriated by Congress, and of contracts for army supplies, I do think Congress, or the Senate by delegation from Congress, has a lawful right to be consulted. At all events, I would not

risk a suit or contest on that phase of the question." [1]

Fortunate for Sherman that he never fell in with any of the schemes of passionate, discredited Andrew Johnson—the man without a compass, without a party, without a brake upon his hates.

Grant became President of the United States in March of 1869; on the day succeeding the inauguration Sherman was appointed to command the United States army. He had previously taken a trip to the South, and found the journey in "every sense agreeable"—a fact which speaks well for the courtesy of the Southerners, who, naturally, had no reason to remember with enthusiasm the guest within their borders. But the feeling of the people in Dixie was much less bitter at that time than it became later, when the evils of negro franchise and "carpet-bag government" began to appear. Sherman even visited the military academy at Alexandria, La. Here he was received as an old friend, not as a conquering enemy; and he found, in the main hall of the institution, his own portrait. The marble tablet which had reposed over the main door, bearing the inscription,—"By the Liberality of the General Government of the United States—The Union: *Esto Perpetua*"—the very inscription to which the general had referred in his official resig-

[1] The troubles with Stanton ended, as we know, in the impeachment trial of Johnson for removing him, and the President secured, for want of the necessary two-thirds vote, an acquittal. General Schofield afterward became secretary of war.

nation of the superintendency of the academy—had been taken out and was now broken in pieces. But Sherman was told that the same legend, this time cut on a tablet of iron, would be placed in the old niche above the door.

His appointment to command the army, in place of Grant, obliged him to come to the much-despised Washington, and proved, in another way, too, not altogether conducive to his pleasure. Like Banquo's ghost, the old question as to the relative functions of the War Department and the general commanding would not down. At first Sherman flattered himself that a much needed reform in this matter was to be made, for the new President, who himself had often felt the evils of the old system, directed that the chiefs of staff corps and the various bureaus of the department should act directly under the orders of Sherman. The general was to be a real general, and not a figure-head, while the secretary would be shorn of some of his powers and influence. But the new secretary of war, General Rawlins (Grant's old-time friend and staff-officer, who succeeded General Schofield in the cabinet position) soon complained, as did many politicians, that the department was now subservient to the commanding general, and that the secretary himself had become the real figure-head. The result was that Grant, whose views as President were often different from his views as lieutenant-general, and who himself was becoming more and more fond of power and

its fruits, rescinded his reform orders.[1] Rawlins, and, after his death, the malodorous Belknap, reverted to the old type of secretary, and Sherman found himself little more than an illustrious puppet.

Sherman was disgusted, disheartened, but his protests with Grant were of no avail. For once the strong friendship between the two men came near the breaking-point. Some time later, in the summer of 1871, he wrote to his brother: "My office has been by law stripped of all the influence and prestige it possessed under Grant, and even in matters of discipline and army control I am neglected, overlooked, or snubbed." How a person of Sherman's temperament must have writhed under this reversal to the bureaucratic power of the War Office! In answer to this complaint John Sherman wrote back urging his brother to go on maintaining the same friendly relations with Grant—"for though he seems willing to strip your office of its power, yet I have no doubt he feels as warm an attachment for you, as, from his temperament, he can to any one."[2]

It is a wonder that Sherman did not impetuously resign his commission, and break with Grant. But he kept calm, in spite of his disappointment.

[1] "His [Grant's] success as a soldier produced an entire change in his character. . . . After accepting the highest position in the army as a right, he entered upon the performance of the duties of the highest civil position without fear. . . . He had the disposition, and only needed the opportunity, to become a dictator."—Hugh McCulloch in "Men and Measures of Half a Century."

[2] "The Sherman Letters," p. 333.

From his grievances the general obtained a pleasant respite in a leave of absence for a European trip, which he took in the autumn and winter of 1871 and during the spring and summer of 1872. He was made a veritable lion and not merely by people of the Mrs. Leo Hunter type. Royalty—whose attentions are ever dear to the republican heart—was as polite as the rest of the world.

Sherman, on his return, lived for a time in Washington, but finally, in the summer of 1874, he got leave to remove his headquarters to St. Louis, and thus escape Secretary of War Belknap and the politicians. It was while in St. Louis that he published his "Memoirs," two volumes of interesting and characteristic narration, infinitely superior, from a literary point of view, to the usual reminiscences of the successful military commander. The distinguished author spoke plainly, as was his wont, and many of us can remember the storm which the work evoked from some quarters. The criticisms were rather welcome than otherwise to Sherman; they bespoke national interest, and gave him an admirable excuse for letter-writing and argument. Posterity may be thankful that he had the industry to prepare these "Memoirs." They form, with the possible exception of Grant's "Personal Memoirs," the most valuable autobiography connected with the Civil War. Indeed, their reading, combined with references to the "Sherman Letters," so well but unpretentiously edited by his daughter, Mrs. Thorndike, will give one otherwise ignorant of the sub-

ject a graphic idea of certain phases of the conflict, military and political.

Throughout these years Sherman's name was constantly being mentioned for the presidency, but he always deprecated the use of it, and with evident sincerity. His correspondence contains frequent disclaimers of any White House ambitions, as when he writes to John Sherman in August, 1874, "not to give any person the least encouragement to think I can be used for political ends. I have seen it poison so many otherwise good characters, that I am really more obstinate than ever. I think Grant will be made miserable to the end of his life by his eight years' experience."

The resignation and fall of Secretary of War Belknap, in the spring of 1876, indirectly resulted in the return to Washington of General Sherman. Judge Taft, the succeeding secretary, was a great admirer of him, and was instrumental in having, through executive order, the powers of the commanding general restored. The headquarters of the army were re-established at the national capital, while Sherman found his position much more congenial than before. Life passed with comparative serenity, and decidedly uneventfully, until his retirement from the army, February 8, 1884, when he had reached the prescribed age of sixty-four years. He had, several months previously, turned over the command of the army to General Sheridan.

The politicians, or at least some of them, were now "booming" Sherman for the Republican nomi-

nation for the presidency. The general returned to St. Louis, in no mood to seek the honor. He had witnessed Grant's loss of prestige in the White House; he had found nothing particularly to envy in the lot of President Hayes; he had seen nothing more to envy in the tragic end of Garfield, or in the succession of Chester A. Arthur. He felt, too, that a military man was not suited to the exactions of the office of chief magistrate. But there seemed, at one time, to be a very strong movement in favor of the hero of the "March to the Sea." Shrewd observers knew that the very name of Sherman had in it an irresistible appeal to a whole legion of voters.

In May, 1884, John Sherman wrote to the general: "It is certain that if Blaine is not nominated in the early ballots a movement will be made for your nomination, and, if entered upon, will go like wildfire. Some one should be authorized to make a definite and positive refusal if you have concluded to decline the nomination, if tendered. My own opinion is still that while you ought not to seek, or even beforehand consent, to accept a nomination, yet if it comes unsought and with cordial unanimity you ought to acquiesce. . . . Blaine could readily turn his strength to you if he cannot get a majority, and, I think, means to do so."

In his answer to this letter General Sherman said that the more he reflected, the more firmly was he convinced that he was wise in putting behind him "any false ambition." "Why should I," he asked,

"at [nearly] sixty-five years of age, with a reasonable provision for life, not a dollar of debt, and with the universal respect of my neighbors and countrymen, embark in the questionable game of politics? The country is in a state of absolute peace, and it would be a farce to declare that any man should sacrifice himself to a mere party necessity."

So far did the movement in favor of General Sherman go that Blaine wrote a letter—marked, characteristically, "strictly, absolutely confidential"—in which this brilliant but always shifty statesman stated that in case of a deadlock in the Republican nominating convention between himself and Arthur the name of Sherman would come to the fore—in which instance, argued Blaine, it was the duty of the general, as a soldier, to accept the duty thus thrust upon him. "You can no more refuse," wrote Blaine, "than you could have refused to obey an order when you were a lieutenant in the army."

But as it came to pass, Blaine and Logan were nominated for President and Vice-President, shining marks for defeat in the following November. Sherman heaved a sigh of relief, sincere rather than affected, when the convention was over. To his brother he wrote: "I feel such a sense of relief that I would approve of anything. My instructions to Henderson,[1] verbal, telegraphic, and written, were all short, emphatic, and clear, and, so far as I am concerned, all may be published; *viz.*, first, to do what was possible to prevent even the mention of my

[1] J. B. Henderson.

name; and, second, that though there should occur a break after the first ballots, and my name should be presented as a compromise, to decline; and, lastly if in spite of such declination I should be nominated, I would decline with an emphasis which might be construed as disrespectful to the convention itself, which, of course, I did not want to do. . . . Anyhow, I escaped, and that to me was salvation."

Sensible Sherman! Had he been nominated and elected, and turned loose to wrestle with the politicians, with his irritable, undiplomatic ways and ignorance of the pitfalls of the presidency, his fame and his peace of mind would have suffered sadly. Would that Grant had been equally coy!

The final years of Sherman's life, from the summer of 1886 to the end in 1891, were spent in New York city. Here he resided peacefully, respected and happy, ever in demand for festive occasions.

Mrs. Sherman died in 1888; she had been a devoted wife, and the parting was hard to bear, but he comforted himself with the thought that the separation would be a short one. She had been a devout Roman Catholic, whilst he was not, but the difference as to belief had worked no estrangement.

Sherman's life in New York, particularly after he moved into his house in West Seventy-first Street, was far from idle. He rose early, ate a light breakfast, and then spent a goodly portion of his morning in the library, a most interesting "den," filled with books and maps. His correspondence consumed a great deal of time, dealing, as it did, with all sorts

of subjects, including numerous invitations to speak before gatherings of veterans. At night he was always in demand for dinners, and he seldom refused to go forth and do battle with his digestion.

A lady once asked the general how he managed to attend so many elaborate dinners without committing "gastronomic suicide"? "I do not touch fifteen per cent. of the dinners I go to," the old warrior answered. "I go to see the diners and enjoy their enjoyment, which I never could do if I was foolish enough to treat my stomach disrespectfully. You see, it has been too staunch a friend to neglect. I eat to live, and am satisfied with the simplest kind of food. Then I take great pains to give hunger a show, and while I believe most thoroughly in the value of regular meals and rest, I have learned how to go through a dining-room without eating a morsel, without being detected, and without hurting the feelings of the hostess." Indeed, Sherman confined himself to the plainest dishes, and never touched champagne or heavy wines. Of all things he abhorred what he called those "mixed-up French dishes," which might be "anything or nothing."

As a host he was no less a model than as a guest. As a story-teller, drawing from the fund of his vast experiences, he was inimitable. On his seventieth birthday, in February of 1890, he gave a little dinner at his home, when he said, in his straightforward, sincere way: "Yes, I am seventy years old to-day, the time allotted for man to live, but I can truly say that I have never felt better for any time

within ten years. Seventy years is a long time, and it seems a great while since I was a boy. Still, I can recall incidents that happened when I was not more than four years of age." His memory was astonishing, and so continued unto the last.

"Sherman's life in New York," said the late John Russell Young, "was as unique as Wellington's in London after Waterloo. He was the first citizen of the metropolis, and no gathering seemed complete without his cheery, dominant presence. He had a rapid, sketchy way of putting things,— Turneresque, one might say — brilliant, vivid, memorable, in contrast with the concentrated, epigrammatic style of Grant. . . . Sherman was fond of the theatre, and was a special favorite among the actors. He believed in the elevation of the stage, as an important element in the welfare of society. I remember how this was shown at the supper given by Augustin Daly to Henry Irving and his company. It was a brilliant occasion, with seventy or eighty guests—the table circular, the centre a parterre of roses, the company the most distinguished. After Daly opened the supper he coaxed Sherman into the chair, and there he sat until six o'clock in the morning, taking Irving by the hand at the close, and, as the company stood, making a graceful and elegant speech of farewell. I remember that some of the younger guests ran away about three in the morning for reasons of health and physical endurance. The general remained until the end, and as we passed

out into Broadway the sun was shining and the milk carts were hurrying over the stony streets on their morning errand."

It is attractive to think of a great war horse growing old so gracefully, amid the incense of roses and admiration, far away from the smell of gunpowder, or the carnage of the battle-field. "There was nothing about the war more worthy of remembrance," Mr. Young went on to relate, "than the affectionate relations of Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan. Grant never seemed to tire of talking about Sherman, nor Sherman about Grant. Concerning the rivalries, the ambitions, heartburnings —perhaps one might say the human nature of the war—the friendship of these three great men should have everlasting remembrance. We have had no public man, with the exception of Lincoln, who could furnish more material [for the biographer] than Sherman. This came from the temperament, the originality, the overflowing genius of the man. Grant and Sheridan were reserved men—Grant especially, unless he was among intimates. But Sherman had no reserve. His genius seemed perennial. There was his marvelous memory, his vivid portraiture, his eloquence which never failed him, and that singularly sweet, penetrating voice, with so much gentleness, and at the same time with so much power, which no one who ever heard can ever forget. I never heard Sherman say an unkind word of any one; I never heard him speak harshly of

his comrades. He was especially kind to Southern men, and all his opinions of the South were stamped with the utmost charity and consideration. No one who had fought against him and accepted the results of the war ever came to Sherman in vain. He was intolerant only of falsehood and enmity to the flag."

It was on the third of February, 1891, that General Sherman wrote to his brother John: "I am drifting along in the old rut in good strength, attending to about four dinners a week at public or private houses, and generally wind up for gossip at the Union League Club." Of the many letters which he had sent his brother, from early boyhood, this was to be the last. He went to the theatre on the evening of the day following; caught cold, presumably in returning home, and soon became very ill with erysipelas of the face and throat. His seventy-first birthday occurred on the 8th; on the 14th of February, 1891, he died. He had joined, as Grant and Sheridan had already done, the phantom army of the conquerors.

Charles De Kay finely expressed the thought of Sherman's passing away to join Grant and Sheridan when he wrote the lines ending with:

> "Rumble, and grumble, ye drums,
> Strain in your throat, O pipes!
> Last of the warriors of oak that were hewn
> Into strength by failure and stripes!
> Last, not least of the heroes old,
> Smoke-begrimed, fervid, crafty, bold —
> Sheridan, Grant, your comrade boon
> Comes—to your haven comes."

Sherman's death was the signal for eulogies and overflowing press notices throughout the North. Even many Southern editors dealt kindly with his memory, after a chivalrous fashion. "He had his faults," said the Atlanta *Constitution*, "very serious ones, but he also had many shining virtues. He always, in his heart, really liked Southerners, and had many personal friends among them. The rebuilding of Atlanta gratified him very much, and he was a firm believer in the future greatness of this region. When all is said that can be said, the fact looms up that this man was one of the greatest soldiers of the age. . . . He was a hard fighter, and never grew sentimental in the presence of bloodshed and death. But when the business of war was over—when he had accomplished his mission—he showed a softer side, and men and women, even among his former foes, found him a very lovable man."

The body of Sherman was laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery, St. Louis, next to the grave of his wife, with all the attending circumstances of military pomp. It was a soldier's funeral, and therefore an appropriate one. It suggested lines from Tennyson's ode on the burial of the Duke of Wellington:

"Hush, the dead march wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seemed so great—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him

Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in state,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him."

Thus passed away one of the greatest figures in the history of the nineteenth century. Loyal, brave in mind and body; in war a relentless genius; in peace kindly and simple; frank to the verge of imprudence; impetuously honest; intolerant of sham; brilliant of brain; with small faults and large virtues; a born commander, stern and bold, yet withal a pleasant gentleman—such was William Tecumseh Sherman. His name will last so long as the Union lasts. Aptly did the stone-cutter chisel upon his tombstone:

"*Faithful and Honorable.*"

THE END

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